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Fear that diplomats may become hostages as Kuwait embassies plan to defy order to close

America calls up 40,000 army reserves

By MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND ANDREW MCEWEN IN LONDON

PRESIDENT Bush yesterday authorised the call-up of an estimated 40,000 reservists as tension increased over Iraq's deadline of tomorrow for the closing of all embassies in Kuwait.

The call-up marked the first mobilisation of reserves for military service since North Vietnam's Tet offensive in 1968.

Mr Bush did not put a figure on the call-up, but Pentagon officials said they expected about 40,000 reservists to be returned to active duty by the end of the month. The president has the authority to activate up to 200,000 men for 90 days without further authority from Congress and can extend that for another 90 days.

Iraq's order to close the embassies in Kuwait has provoked anger and apprehension, but many countries have rejected it, giving rise to fears of diplomats being taken hostage in all but name.

Baghdad repeated its warning that those diplomats who remained in Kuwait would be treated as ordinary citizens, which might mean that they could be sent to military establishments or factories to be used as human shields. This would probably not provoke a Western military response, but would make the prospects for a diplomatic solution even slimmer.

Michael Weston, the British ambassador, and Nathaniel Howell, his American counterpart, are expected to remain at their posts, although with reduced

staffs. Britain, which had 21 diplomats at the time of the invasion, was down to eight yesterday. Their number will be reduced to four by tomorrow. The others will move to the British embassy in Baghdad. America intends to evacuate all but a few of its 120 diplomats. Most European Community countries and

ON OTHER PAGES

Three pages of reports and analysis... 2, 3, 4

US pride, Bernard Levin, Diary... Page 8
Leading article and Letters... Page 9
Oil price high... Page 19

some East European, Nordic and Asian nations are also refusing to close their embassies.

Departing from a previous reluctance to use the word "hostage", Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, yesterday told the BBC: "So long as we have citizens held (in Kuwait) as hostages, we must do our utmost to keep our own folk there... someone in touch with them."

Mr Hurd has discouraged speculation that Britain might retaliate by taking steps against Iraqi diplomats in London. A Whitehall source said: "We are not going to get involved in tit-for-tat gestures."

Referring to reports that the embassies in Kuwait are being closed by force Iraq might enter them and search for lists of foreign nationals and their addresses, another Whitehall source said: "You can take it that the proper precautions have been taken."

Closure of the embassies would make it more difficult for Britain and America to keep track of how many of their nationals have been rounded up. The Foreign Office put the number of Britons so far taken away at 137, of which 76 were being held in accommodation attached to civilian establishments, such as factories, and 21 at military bases. The whereabouts of the others is unknown.

Margaret Thatcher yesterday described the reported round-up of ten Britons from their homes on Tuesday as scandalous. Tom King, the

defence secretary, said Iraq could not influence Britain's actions by taking hostages.

The Iraqi News Agency said some French and Japanese nationals would be freed as a goodwill gesture. There are an estimated 560 French citizens and 508 Japanese in Kuwait and Iraq. It is unclear how many will be allowed to leave.

There was confusion yesterday after an Iraqi official in Kuwait told an Italian diplomat that citizens of some EC countries would be allowed to leave. Britain was not among them. Whitehall sources said last night that a senior Iraqi official at the foreign ministry in Baghdad had denied that there was any change.

Saudi Arabia said it would start accepting new recruits for its armed forces from Saturday. King Fahd ordered the opening of recruiting and training centres throughout the country, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

Virginia Rognoni, Italy's defence minister, confirmed that Rome would send two frigates and a supply ship to the Gulf. The vessels were among five Italian ships deployed in the eastern Mediterranean in the past week.

King Hussein of Jordan said he would visit Iraq and other Arab countries to try to avert war. "We are almost facing the kind of crisis of a world gone mad," he said. His tour is likely to start today.

Mr Hurd continued to discourage a view that conflict is almost inevitable. "We do not want to use force, we want the UN Security Council's resolutions to work. We want the economic sanctions to bring an end to aggression," he told the BBC.

Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, supported the prime minister's handling of the situation and said Labour, had it been in power, would have taken similar decisions.

Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed, foreign minister of Kuwait, said in Peking that Chinese leaders had assured him that China would not veto a proposed UN resolution that would allow countries with naval forces in the Gulf to enforce trade sanctions, using minimum force.

China and the other four permanent members of the Security Council held further talks in New York, but again failed to pass such a resolution.



Our men in Dhahran: Air Vice-Marshal "Sandy" Wilson, commander UK forces, and Sir Alan Munro, British ambassador to Saudi Arabia

Minister may quit in Paris

FROM ALAN TILLIER IN PARIS

MICHEL Rocard, the French prime minister, yesterday gave his defence minister, Jean-Pierre Chevènement, 48 hours to retract or resign over remarks proposing a soft line towards Saddam Hussein at a time when President Mitterrand has placed France squarely in the Anglo-American camp.

M Chevènement told Agence France-Press that he feared an American attack against Iraq "in a few days" with perhaps the loss of tens of thousands of lives, before United Nations-led negotiations "could lead the Iraqis to evacuate Kuwait without losing face".

Those statements were embarrassing for M Mitterrand with his new commitment of French ground forces in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, in addition to the seven-ship French fleet now in place off Djibouti. Perhaps more damaging for M Chevènement was the publication yesterday by the investigative newspaper *Le*

Canard Enchaîné of a list showing that he was a founder-member of the Franco-Iraqi friendship club in 1985. M Chevènement was education minister at the time, but failed to get government clearance to join the club. Another founding member is an extreme right-wing, anti-semitic journalist.

The left-wing daily *Libération* said that M Chevènement had made clear his opposition at emergency talks called by M Mitterrand on Tuesday after Iraq added 33 French citizens to the Western hostages it is holding. At one point, the paper reported, the president asked the minister: "Do you agree with French policy or not?"

M Chevènement is a controversial figure, starting on the far left of the French socialist party before becoming a gung-ho defence minister, who recently opposed cuts in Western defence budgets. His remarks were tainted with Gaullist-style opposition to US-led military force.

Shambles and tears as stores reopen

By LIN JENKINS

AS THE three-seater sofa was cased through the door into a waiting van howls of protest went up from the small crowd outside Queensway's largest store.

"How can he have that?" Pearl Windom shouted on the verge of tears. "We've already paid for the things in there."

Mrs Windom, a night nurse, was one of many who stood for hours outside the store in Angel Road, Edmonton, north London, in the hope of receiving the goods they had paid for just before the Lowndes Queensway collapse. Having parted with £514 from her savings for a teak unit, Mrs Windom was in no mood to see staff still selling for cash.

"I've been told that if there is a unit here like the one I ordered I can pay cash for the full sum and take it away and then try and claim from their insurers for the money I originally paid out. That means they want me to pay twice — do I really look that silly?" she said before returning to her home at Angel, north London.

Lorna Smith watched in dismay as the two-seater sofa she thought she had paid for went to another cash customer.

Continued on page 18, col 3

26 are injured in fourth rail crash

By RONALD FAUX

TWO trains collided head-on near Manchester yesterday injuring 26 people in the fourth serious accident on the British Rail network in only four weeks.

BR launched an immediate inquiry into how the 9.36 InterCity service from Manchester Piccadilly to Sheffield and a local two-coach diesel service between Roschill and Manchester Piccadilly collided 200 yards from Hyde North station near Manchester. The accident happened on a single-track section controlled by signals.

The injured were taken to Tameside general hospital at Ashton-under-Lyne. One person was treated for a back injury, two suffered fractures and the remainder were treated for cuts and bruises. An elderly woman was detained overnight. The drivers of both trains escaped injury.

Labour's transport spokes-

man, John Prescott, said that the accident "emphasised the dimension of cost-cutting priorities in British Rail".

A BR spokesman said: "Judging by the light damage, both drivers must have taken action to stop their trains, and, by the look of it, almost made it."

An internal inquiry will be held by BR on Monday. Its findings will be passed to government investigators.

The state of accidents this month has fuelled concern over BR's safety record. A train driver died and 20 people were injured when an empty four-carriage train ran into the back of an InterCity express at Stafford station on August 4.

Three days earlier, a packed commuter train on the wrong line at Reading, Berkshire, ploughed into another train injuring 29 people. On July

Continued on page 18, col 6

Trade gap worsening

Britain's trade gap widened last month against expectations, increasing the current account deficit from £1.26 billion to £1.39 billion.

Analysts had forecast a fall because of the slow-down in the economy and a stronger pound cutting the price of imports. But though imports were 2% lower than June, exports were down by 3.5%. Page 19

Warming dispute

Claims that sea levels will rise and flood low-lying land because of global warming were not supported by evidence. The southern part of the Greenland ice sheet is thickening at the rate of 20cm a year, the British Association was told yesterday. Page 5

Credit action

Legal proceedings are to be brought against the four main credit reference agencies by the Data Protection Registrar for their failure to stop passing information to lenders about individuals who are not seeking credit. Page 6

Township toll

After the collapse of peace moves, factional war resumed in South Africa yesterday. Rival factions shot, stabbed or burnt to death at least 37 people. Page 7

Degree courses

A list of vacancies remaining for degree courses at British universities is published today. Page 25

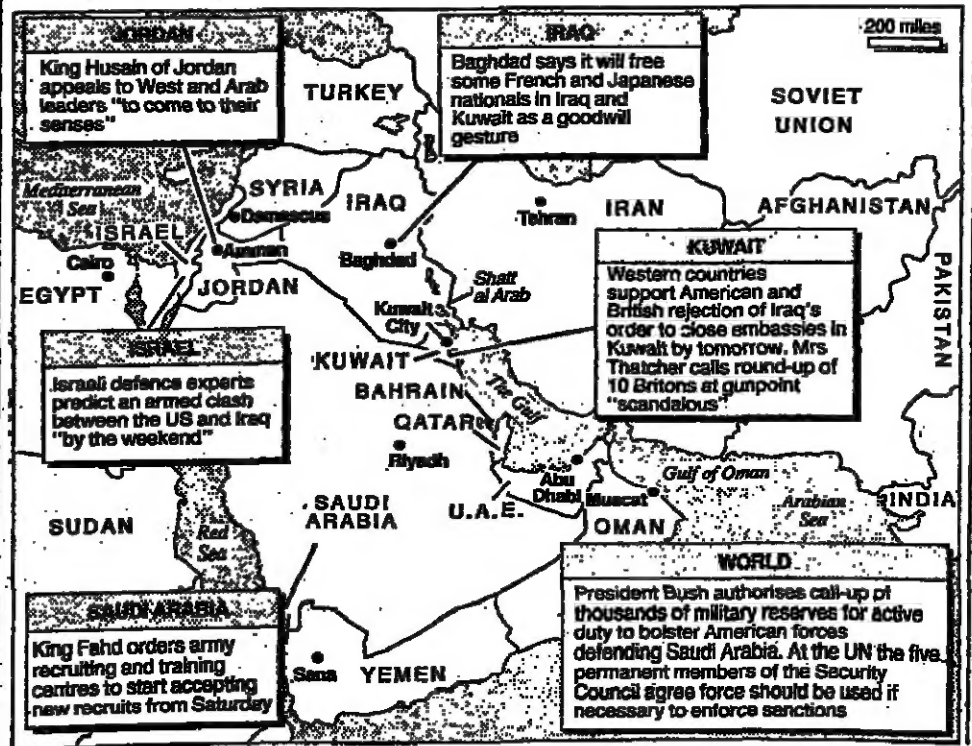
Accountancy

Results of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants' June 1990 exams appear today. Page 10

INDEX

Arts	15, 18
Births, marriages, deaths	11
Books	18-22
Business	10
Court & Social	10
Crosswords	11, 18
Health	13
Leading articles	9
Letters	10
Obituary	12
Science & Technology	28-30
Sport	17
TV & Radio	17
Weather	18

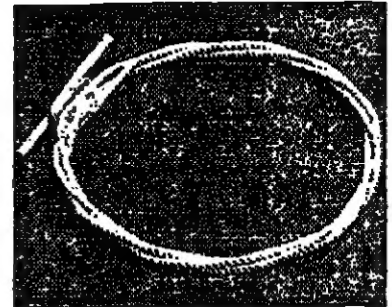
OS



Treasure hunter strikes gold in Wiltshire field

By SIMON TAIT
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A 14-INCH ring of twisted gold wire found by a treasure hunter in a Wiltshire field last week could be one of the most significant Bronze Age finds, archaeologists believe. Dennis Chaddock, aged 53, from Trowbridge, who was using a metal detector, found the piece 12in deep in open downland near Warminster.



The torc: "in fine condition" someone of considerable status. Wiltshire is rich in archaeology, but we have never found a complete torc before.

The gold might have come from Ireland or Wales, and an axe found nearby by dates the torc to between 1,100-1,000BC. Nick Merriman, the

Museum of London's curator of prehistoric antiquities, said: "It is a very rare find. There have been Iron Age torcs of around 600BC found from time to time, mostly in East Anglia, but nothing like this in recent years. The owner would have been a near contemporary of Tutankhamun, and perhaps in his society as important, but so little is known of the period in Britain. There are no burial mounds from that time, but this may have been a votive offering to a god or buried as part of a funeral ceremony, or it might have been stored."

Auction houses were reluctant to give a valuation without having seen the object, but Fiona Quinn, the antiquities expert for Phillips, said that estimates of £5 million being mentioned seemed absurdly high. "The difficulty is that finds of this sort are rare and even rarer on the market." A more realistic valuation is likely to be about £100,000.

The torc will now be the subject of a coroner's inquest to determine if it was stored with the intention to recover it, or if it was lost. If it was stored to be recovered later it is treasure trove and belongs to the Crown, with the finder being compensated; otherwise it could be returned to the finder or owner of the land, who is remaining anonymous.

Mr Chaddock, speaking at Salisbury police station where the torc is being held in safekeeping before being taken to the British Museum for examination, said that he was elated. "It's a great joy to find such a thing but it belongs to the British heritage." If it was returned to him, he said, he would give it to the British Museum.

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THE INVASION OF KUWAIT: INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE

WASHINGTON

Bush calls up reservists for the first time since Vietnam

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Bush ordered the call-up of tens of thousands of reservists to support the US military deployment in the Gulf, the first such mobilisation for military purposes since the 1968 Tet offensive in Vietnam.

Mr Bush did not specify numbers, but Pentagon officials said they expected an initial call-up of about 40,000 reservists by the end of the month. Most would serve in the US and would be specialists in activities ranging from medicine to cargo handling. The administration also announced that it would defy an Iraqi order to close its embassy in Kuwait by tomorrow. The State Department said it would seek to evacuate all but the most essential of its 120 diplomats, but joined Britain and a number of other countries in declaring that it had rejected an order which was based on the "false" premise that Kuwait was a part of Iraq.

Iraq warned on Monday that diplomats remaining in Kuwait after tomorrow would lose their diplomatic immunity. The US has refused to speculate on the action it might take were Baghdad to round up Nathaniel Howell, the ambassador, and his colleagues, but such action would provoke a furious reaction.

It remains to be seen whether Iraq will allow the non-essential US diplomats and their dependents to leave

Kuwait. There are 2,500 Americans in Kuwait and the embassy would remain open in accordance with "our obligations to the American private community", the State Department said.

Mr Bush has the authority to mobilise up to 200,000 of the 1.6 million reserves for 180 days without congressional approval, but Martin Fitzwater, his spokesman, said he did not anticipate that the call-up would approach that level. It could, however, exceed the 100,000 summoned by President Kennedy during the 1961 Berlin crisis.

Like President Johnson during the Vietnam war, Mr Bush was apparently reluctant to take a step which, by plucking individuals from civilian life, risks unnerving the public, fomenting opposition to military intervention, and disrupting local economies. It will also add hugely to the costs of Operation Desert Shield.

For the present, domestic support for Mr Bush's handling of the confrontation and his dispatch of US forces to the Middle East remains overwhelming, with a *New York Times* poll yesterday giving Mr Bush the highest ratings of any president since Kennedy outlasted the Russians during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

Glory restored, page 8



Action stations: Able Seaman Foz Parker and Wiggly Bennett going through gun drill on board HMS Battlexe, patrolling in the central Gulf in temperatures reaching 100°F

UNITED NATIONS

Security Council divided over UN role

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE five permanent members of the Security Council are agreed that force should be used if necessary to enforce sanctions against Iraq, but remained divided when they met yesterday about precisely how the United Nations should oversee naval action against Iraqi shipping.

"Everyone agrees that when and if the time comes, force should be used," a Western diplomat said. "On the principle there is no disagreement. Where there is, it is on the procedures and the timing."

On the table in yesterday's private meeting of the five —

Britain, China, France, the United States and the Soviet Union — was the American draft proposal circulated to all 15 Security Council members on Monday night.

The text calls on states deploying maritime forces to the Gulf "to use such minimum force as may be necessary under the authority of the Security Council", to enforce the UN embargo on Iraq and occupied Kuwait.

The problematic passage deals with the precise role of the United Nations, diplomatic sources said. Paragraph four of the draft "requests the states concerned to co-ordinate their actions in pursuit of the above para-

graphs of this resolution using as appropriate the mechanisms of the Military Staff Committee". The Military Staff Committee is a dormant sub-committee of the Security Council, consisting of the chiefs of staff of the five powers.

The Soviet Union, which proposed a UN naval operation in the Gulf in the first place, has been seeking a large role for the sub-committee, which it chairs this month. But the Western powers, Britain, France and the United States, reluctant to put their warships under UN command, envisage a more limited role for the panel.

Although the Soviet Union

appears to be using its ability to delay adoption of the resolution to win concessions on the form of the UN involvement, the dispute does not appear to jeopardise the basic agreement.

None of the five is pressing for a full UN force under Article 42 of the UN Charter, which allows the Security Council to order military action to enforce sanctions imposed under Article 41. Some halfway house is being sought, described by diplomats as "Article Forty-one-and-a-half".

● Yemen rift: A rift between Ali Abdullah Saleh, Yemen's president and Abdul Karim al-Eryani, his prime minister,

complicated the country's role in the conflict, according to Western diplomatic sources, who described Mr al-Attas as pro-Iraqi and Dr al-Eryani as pro-Egyptian.

In one sign of differences between the two, a senior Yemeni official confirmed yesterday that the Ain Zalah, an Iraqi tanker docked at Aden, had been ordered to stop unloading oil five hours after it docked at the Red Sea port on Tuesday morning.

The official said the ship had unloaded only "a small part of the shipment" of Iraqi crude, in what oil industry sources described at the time as the first breach of UN sanctions against Iraq.

CHINA

Peking 'will not veto' use of force

FROM CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

KUWAIT'S foreign minister says Chinese leaders have assured him that Peking would not veto a proposed UN resolution allowing enforcement of an embargo against Iraq.

Sheikh Sabah al-Sabah said in Peking yesterday: "If China does not vote for the resolution, it will not vote against it either."

He was speaking after a morning of talks with Li Peng, the prime minister, and Qian Qichen, the foreign minister.

China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Until now other Security Council members have been unsure what Peking's reaction to the proposal would be. China has opposed Western military intervention in the Gulf, and has repeatedly spoken out against what it sees as American interference in the affairs of other countries.

The sheikh said he was satisfied with Chinese support for the UN sanctions. "I think that the position of the Chinese government is that it will abide by the UN resolution," he said.

During the Iran-Iraq war China was one of the biggest suppliers of arms to both sides. Often its weapons went through third countries, and China never admitted publicly that it was supplying Iraq.

The sheikh also expressed gratitude for China's support of the UN resolution. He will visit Iran and the Soviet Union next to try to secure military support.

A subject close to the Chinese leadership's heart but probably far from that of the Kuwaiti leadership is the Asian Games, due to start here on September 22. Many Middle East countries are scheduled to participate, but a poll has been cast over the event by developments in the Gulf.

Iraq has already said it would still attend but Sheikh Sabah al-Sabah said Kuwait would not agree to a joint Iraq-Kuwait team. He did not say whether Kuwait would boycott the event.

The sheikh said that his brother, head of the Asian Olympic Committee, had been discussing finance for the Asian Games with China but had died defending the emir's palace. He said the financial agreement his brother had established would stand.

SOVIET UNION

Saudi envoy holds talks with Moscow

FROM MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

EDUARD Shevardnadze, the Soviet foreign minister, yesterday held talks with Prince Bandar bin Sultan, a Saudi special envoy, on the mounting tension in the Gulf.

Prince Bandar, the Saudi ambassador to the United States, arrived in Moscow shortly after the departure of Saddam Hammadi, the Iraqi special envoy who had held two days of apparently difficult talks with Soviet ministers. The two visits are part of an intensive round of diplomacy taking place in the Soviet capital. In the past 24 hours, Soviet officials have also received the Egyptian and American ambassadors.

The American ambassador was given a letter from Mr Shevardnadze for his American counterpart, James Baker, the Secretary of State. The contents of the letter have not been disclosed.

Before he left Moscow, Mr Hammadi was told by Nikolai Ryzhkov, the Soviet prime minister, that the Soviet Union intended to fulfil its obligations under United Nations Security Council resolutions. He said all foreigners in Iraq and Kuwait should be allowed to leave, "without discrimination".

Moscow yesterday denied it was failing to carry out the Security Council resolution imposing sanctions on Iraq and defended itself against the charge that it was delaying a decision to back sanctions with force.

A foreign ministry spokesman quoted from an order,

issued by Mr Ryzhkov, instructing Soviet ministries and other institutions to comply with the requirements of the UN resolution "and work out specific measures to minimise damage to the Soviet Union".

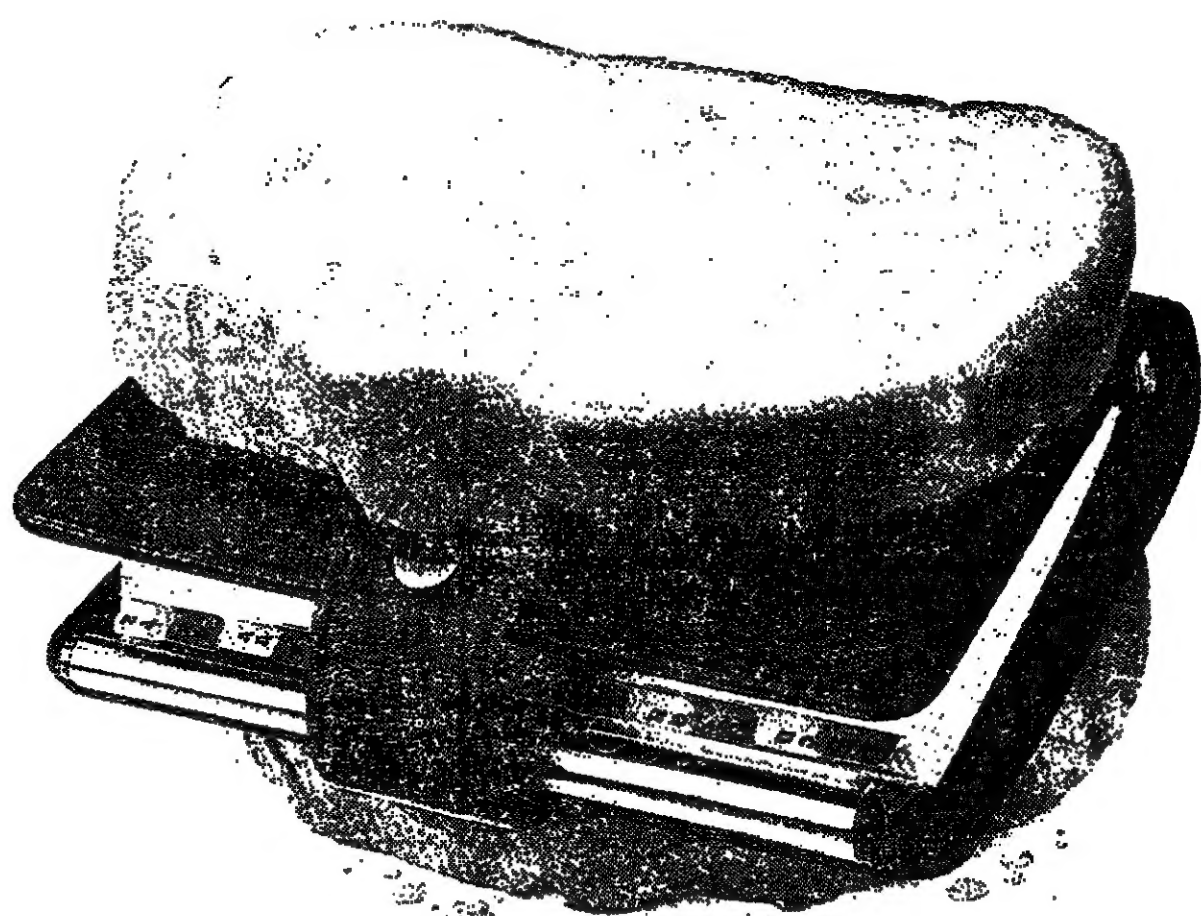
On the use of force, he said the Soviet Union's position was based on "the necessity to avoid hasty action and show maximum caution in... the use of force".

Colonel Valentin Ogurtsov, a Soviet military specialist, disclosed that arms shipments to Iraq had been stopped in transit and turned back after the invasion of Kuwait. However, he said Soviet military specialists in Iraq were still performing their duties, but no more would be sent. He denied that their presence breached sanctions.

Tass later reported that Prince Bandar had brought with him a letter for President Gorbachev from King Fahd. Prince Bandar said he had been pleased with his talks with Mr Shevardnadze, which he described as "serious and constructive".

He said that there was now a better understanding between Saudi Arabia and the Soviet Union and expressed appreciation for the Soviet position at the UN. He was quoted as saying that the Soviet Union "could play a big role in convincing President Saddam Hussein one way or another that he acted wrongly and should return everything to its rightful place".

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Troop costs will add to soaring deficit say US budget officials

FROM SUSAN ELLICOTT IN WASHINGTON

AMID the high public approval ratings for his handling of the Gulf confrontation, President Bush faces some dismal news. The cost of sending troops to the Middle East seems likely to swell the United States' budget deficit to its largest figure yet.

In the wake of the deployment of tens of thousands of American troops to the region, the budget offices of the White House and Congress have produced one of the earliest reassessments of the sum that has dogged Mr Bush's presidency in recent months. The administration can expect the federal deficit to rise during the coming fiscal year by about \$1 billion (£520 million) to \$232.3 billion, according to financial experts in the administration.

The preliminary calculation indicates only a small rise, but government officials predict the final tally will certainly be far larger, possibly adding tens of billions of dollars once the jump in defence spending and expected deceleration of the pace of economic growth are taken into consideration. Esti-

mates of the potential size of the budget shortfall have now reached \$250 billion to \$300 billion. The biggest federal budget deficit in recent history was \$221.2 billion in 1986.

Without adjusting for the likely effect on the American economy of events in the Middle East, the White House revised its estimate of the 1991 deficit, including the bill for halting the nation's failed savings and loan institutions. Without a large part of these costs, which have soared since the government launched its bail-out scheme more than a year ago, administration financial experts estimate that the deficit will be \$149.4 billion.

President Bush, anxious to avoid the introduction of the automatic across-the-board spending cuts required by law if he and Congress fail to agree on a way to trim the budget deficit to \$64 billion by October 1, has in recent weeks launched stern attacks against the Democrats in an attempt to blame them for the breakdown earlier this summer of bipartisan deficit-cutting

talks. Twice in little more than a week he has interrupted his holiday at his family home in New England to return to Washington for meetings about the budget with his senior economic advisers.

The prospect of the Middle East conflict significantly worsening the budget shortfall could reduce the strong support among Americans for Mr Bush's handling of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Although an overwhelming 72 per cent of citizens continue to support his actions, a national opinion poll published yesterday by *The Wall Street Journal* showed that a surprising number of Americans over the past month have started to believe that their country will suffer a recession in the coming year.

According to the survey, 57 per cent now think there will be a recession, compared with 49 per cent before developments in the Middle East began. The number who do not believe a recession is imminent wavered only marginally from 25 per cent to 26 per cent.

Palestinian support for Saddam puts Israeli peaceniks out on a limb

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN JERUSALEM

TOMORROW Marion, a middle-aged Israeli and mother of two, will dress in black and stand with other left-wing, pro-peace women of Jerusalem on a square near the prime minister's residence. Since the Palestinian uprising or *intifada* began nearly three years ago, the "women in black" of the group Peace Now have been the symbol of Israel's conscience, persistently opposing Israel's occupation of the West Bank, silently holding placards demanding peace talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and braving taunts and stonings.

But yesterday Marion and many like her were in a state of uncertainty, even anguish.

The Israeli peace camp's assumption that Israel should pave the way for independent Palestine as its neighbour by talking to the PLO is in tatters. The PLO and almost all rank-and-file Palestinians continue to express fervent support for Saddam Hussein three weeks after Baghdad's invasion of

Kuwait. So do many of the normally loyal Israeli Arabs.

The women in black are increasingly confronted, even outnumbered, by right-wing activists dressed in white who brand Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, a murderer in the Saddam mould. They call on Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, to annex the West Bank and expel its Arab inhabitants into an increasingly unstable Jordan.

A member of Israel's right-wing government, Rahamin Ze'evi of the far-right Moledet party, this week suggested Israel should imitate President Saddam's tactic of using foreigners as "human shields" and round up Palestinian Arabs, placing them at key installations to deter an Iraqi missile or chemical weapons attack.

Between them, President Saddam and Mr Arafat have dealt a devastating blow to the Israeli left and strengthened the already buoyant right wing. Even after the formation of the exclusively right-wing Shamir government earlier this

summer, Peace Now was still able to mobilise thousands in favour of an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue. In the new climate, created almost overnight, this would be unthinkable.

This week, Peace Now published an open letter to the pro-PLO Palestinian leadership in the occupied territories, expressing "disappointment at enthusiastic Palestinian support for Saddam Hussein". Palestinians were naturally frustrated, the letter said, by the paralysis of the peace process, the rise of the right in Israel and the end of the dialogue between the United States and the PLO. But it said, "support for Saddam Hussein is support for the resolution of disputes between nations by force... The path of Saddam Hussein is the path of violence, threats and war".

For Israeli right-wingers, the Gulf confrontation has simply revealed the PLO's true colours. But the left faces the collapse of years of well-meant effort, at risk of imprisonment, to reach out to Mr Arafat. Now, in the face of an imminent

external threat, Israelis of all persuasions are closing ranks to defend the very survival of the Jewish state.

Almost everyone in Israel seems to assume that a US-Iraq war will break out within the next two to three weeks, if not earlier, and that Israel will be dragged into it. From Tel Aviv beach cafes to the religious quarters of Jerusalem, the talk is of gas masks: how to obtain them, and when and where the authorities should issue them.

The prospect of war comes as no surprise to a nation which feels constantly that its existence is at stake. But there is mounting nervous tension, and resentment of Arab neighbours who have persuaded themselves that President Saddam is a "liberator". Even some Israeli "peaceniks" find it hypocritical that the same Palestinians who march with pictures of President Saddam, urging the Iraqi leader to "liberate Palestine", want an assurance that Israeli civil defence will issue gas masks to Palestinians as well as Israelis. "You

need a gas mask at the moment just to cope with the poisonous fumes generated by the Palestinian stand on Iraq," said Yossi Sarid, a normally pro-Palestinian left-wing MP from the Citizens' Rights Movement.

At the weekend Abba Eban, one of the Labour party's leading doves and a former foreign minister, decided with other Labour figures to suspend all contacts with Faisal Husseini and other pro-PLO leaders in east Jerusalem until they clearly condemned President Saddam. Some dissenting voices in the peace camp point out that "when all this is over", the Palestinian question will remain, and so in all probability will the PLO.

Mr Husseini, for his part, tried to explain to Israelis that the frenzied marchers in West Bank towns were not so much pro-Saddam as anti-American. America, he said, had failed the Palestinians, and President Saddam's attempt to link Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait to Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank

had given hope to a people that had nothing to lose. Other Palestinian leaders say the PLO does not condone the acquisition of territory by force but point out that the United States has failed to oust Israel from the West Bank for the past 23 years "because here no oil supplies are at stake".

The bitterness and despair in such Palestinian comments is unmistakable. But yesterday the response of many Israelis was robust. "This proves that a Palestinian state next door to us would be as barbaric as Iraq," a garage owner said. "I would even support the deportation of Palestinians to Jordan."

Left-wing activists put it differently. "Unless the PLO breaks away from Saddam instead of just qualifying its support for him, the Gulf states will stop financing the PLO and Arafat will be throttled," said one. "I'm very much afraid that if Saddam is defeated, and one way or another he will be, the idea of a state of Palestine will disappear altogether."

Setbacks unlikely to break Iraqi leader's dream of dominance

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

SITTING in his heavily fortified command bunker 100ft beneath a street in the suburbs of Baghdad, President Saddam Hussein continues to indulge his fantasies of dominating the Arab world. Armed with an array of exotic weaponry — ballistic missiles, super-cannons and eventually, a nuclear and biological capability — and his rhetoric and propaganda, he has convinced himself that his army is invincible.

But, every day since the August 2 invasion of Kuwait, by three divisions of his trusted Republican Guards, his options have been changing. He has already lost one military option, taking Saudi Arabia before the Americans arrived, and his diplomatic offensive — public tirades against the Americans — has failed to achieve its objective. With the exception of Palestinians on the streets of Jordan and his own people, the Arab world has turned against him.

Even Colonel Qaddafi, the Libyan leader, has publicly condemned the taking of foreign hostages and has offered military support if the United Nations were to approve a naval blockade of Iraq. China, the sole member of the UN Security Council considered most likely to veto a naval blockade, has now said it will not stand in the way of military action to enforce sanctions.

Undoubtedly, President Saddam believes one military option still available, an attack on Israel, would bring Arab nations rushing to his side to defeat what he would claim is an Israeli-American

axis against the Arab world. But even this assumption can no longer be relied upon with such conviction. There are some strange alliances being forged in the common cause against President Saddam.

Would Syria, eager to forge better links with the United States, turn its guns and missiles on Israel at the first sign of Israeli military involvement against Iraq? Would Egypt have second thoughts about its build-up of troops and armour in support of Saudi Arabia? President Saddam cannot be sure of the answers.

But, as his options change, it would be wrong to assume that the Iraqi leader's decision to plant foreign nationals at military and industrial installations, and his supposedly unconditional offer, delivered by his foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, to hold talks with the US, are signs of weakness and desperation. They are actions that underline his increasing isolation, but any setbacks on the diplomatic or military front are unlikely to divert him from his strategic ambitions which stretch beyond the boundaries of the Middle East.

Wearing the uniform of a field marshal, though he was never trained as a soldier, President Saddam will not be listening to his military commanders who dare to proffer advice. None of his senior military officers was appointed for their expertise. As one military expert said: "They are in his command bunker to tell him what he wants to hear."

Assuming his operational bunker has maps listing known American, Saudi and

British force deployments on the ground and the international naval armada in the Gulf and Red Sea, what will be President Saddam's main concerns, now his counterpart in the US has called up thousands of reserves, the clearest sign of an American determination to see Operation Desert Shield through to the bitter end?

First, his military options are no longer dependent on Iraq's ability to wage war, the only yardstick when he sent in his troops to overwhelm Kuwait. He knew there would be no opposition and he must have realised that the US and other Western countries had calculated that there would be no Iraqi invasion. Stage one, therefore, was easy.

The next phase, moving into Saudi Arabia, seizing the main oil fields in the eastern region and some principal military bases, and possibly taking control of Riyadh, would have been more difficult because of the extended lines of communication, the logistics and the threat from the Saudi air force. But, with the arrival of the Americans, in particular the squadrons of F-15s and F-16s, that ambition has been put to one side.

Second, with Saudi Arabia under American lock and key, the whole focus of President Saddam's and President Bush's strategy has switched back to Kuwait. If there is to be a war, it will be fought in Kuwait, with the US taking the initiative and Iraq attempting to hold out behind defensive positions. That is not to exclude Saudi Arabia and Iraq from the battlefield. If the prize is to be Kuwait, the Americans will have to mount surgical strikes on at least three main air bases between Basra and the Kuwaiti border to prevent Iraqi fighters from attacking American ground forces moving into Kuwait.

Similarly, Iraq would be likely to mount a missile attack on key Saudi bases in an attempt to cause panic, undermine morale and disrupt American and British supply lines.

General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley, former commander-in-chief Allied Forces Northern Europe, said that, in an American operation to recapture Kuwait, "The first priority would be to isolate Kuwait by taking out the closest air bases in Iraq which pose the greatest threat."

There are three main air bases, in Basra, at Samarra in the southwest, at Safwan, in the south, close to the border with Kuwait. But there are also at least six minor airfields where the runway surfaces were improved by the Iraqis during the war with Iran, at Ar Rumaylah, directly west of Basra, at Shaibah West, at Az Zubayr and dotted around Basra.

Leading article, page 9



Sister-in-arms: an airwoman of the US 1st Tactical Fighter Wing eating her breakfast surrounded by male comrades at a base in Saudi Arabia

JORDAN

King clings to fragile popularity with a diplomatic balancing act

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN AMMAN

PROOF of the dilemma now facing King Hussein, the most serious of his turbulent 38-year reign, came during two very different meetings on Tuesday in the palace where he has been locked with advisers since returning empty-handed from Kennebunkport last week.

At the first, arranged at short notice, Tariq Aziz, the chief envoy for President Saddam Hussein, handed him a letter from the Iraqi leader and, according to Jordanian sources, praised him for his almost lone voice of sympathy for the Iraqi case.

At the second, Tariq Nakayama, the Japanese foreign minister, tried to convince him to impose immediate sanctions against Iraq and offered a \$20 million (\$10.5 million) sweetener which was rejected. Playing for time, the king is understood to have informed the Japanese that his country would adhere to the UN resolution on a trade embargo with Iraq but, before that, unspecified technical points had to be cleared up.

Jordan has submitted a report to the UN on the grave economic consequences for it of imposing such an embargo, while full-blooded sanctions could provoke such a wave of anger among the passionately pro-Iraqi Jordanian people that the king's fragile throne would be in jeopardy.

The strength of feeling in Jordan was reflected yesterday in a blood-curdling editorial in the semi-official Amman paper *Al-Rai* stating that all Westerners in the Middle East

were now Arab targets. "The hatred, contempt and determination of the West to turn us into a nation of slaves has left us no chance except fighting a fierce, merciless and endless war which will make everything and everyone Western a target that must be struck in defence of our religion, national identity and dignity," the normally temperate paper wrote.

More anti-American protests were staged in different parts of Jordan yesterday, including one outside the US embassy. This afternoon thousands of Jordanian women are expected to march through the centre of Amman in support of King Hussein's stand of sympathy for President Saddam. The march is being organised by Islamic fundamentalists who have united firmly behind the king, making him — for the moment

at least — as popular with the broad mass of his people as at any time in his reign.

One Western official said: "The sudden burst of popularity is in strict contrast to last year's anti-government riots. But it is brittle and dependent on him showing continued backing for Iraq. If he was suddenly seen to turn the screws on Iraq, the fervour in the streets could just as quickly turn against him."

The Jordanians are desperately anxious to obtain statements that the United Nations Charter will at least permit them to supply a wide range of food and medicines to Baghdad.

A number of Western nations are discreetly advising the United States not to put too much pressure on the king, for fear that any replacement of his measured and diplomatically nimble rule could

drag Jordan into war with Israel.

Diplomats who continue to admire the king despite his reverence of President Saddam (whom he recently described as an "Arab patriot") hope that he will be able to finesse the sanctions question. "He could still be used as a vital conciliator," claimed an Arab official.

Veteran Hussein-watchers, most of whom have been taken aback by his enthusiasm for Iraq, believe the keys to his stand have been his nostalgia for Arab nationalism and disillusionment with the US.

"Hussein is the most complex of all the Arab rulers. He is also a man whose presence in charge is vital if any sort of stability is to be maintained," said one expert. "If he falls, any conflagration in the Gulf could be even more serious than that already predicted."

Japanese offer cash aid to Cairo

FROM SARAH GAUCH IN CAIRO

EGYPT'S sinking economy, even more burdened by the Gulf crisis, may get a financial boost from Japan after a meeting yesterday between President Mubarak and Taro Nakayama, the Japanese foreign minister.

"Although Japan cannot send forces, the government is quite ready to provide assistance to countries which are seriously affected by the current situation," said Makoto Yamamaka, Tokyo's foreign

ministry spokesman. "These measures will include economic assistance."

Japan's 1946 constitution bars it from military involvement outside the country. However, Japan could contribute not only financial aid, but also medical and communications personnel and the use of Japanese mine-sweepers. The package would be unprecedented in scope, a Japanese foreign ministry spokesman said on Tuesday in

Jordan. Egypt, which has a budget deficit of 18 per cent of gross domestic product and 30 to 40 per cent inflation, is being urged by the International Monetary Fund to introduce sweeping economic reforms.

Until Egypt completes its negotiations with the IMF, Japan is unable to contribute official aid, according to a Japanese economist. So aid would have to be in the form of "emergency assistance".

ISRAEL

Armed clash likely 'by the weekend'

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI defence experts yesterday predicted that an armed clash could erupt between the United States and Iraq "by the weekend", and said Israel almost certainly would become involved if President Saddam Hussein launched a strike against the Jewish state.

Senior army, civil defence and intelligence officers yesterday briefed Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, and his cabinet on developments in secret session. But Mr Shamir deferred a decision on whether the Israeli civil defence authorities should issue gas masks to civilians against a possible Iraqi chemical attack. Some commentators said an armed confrontation would not take place for another week to ten days, giving the United States time to build up its forces.

As the cabinet met yesterday, the defence correspondent of the mass-circulation daily, *Yedioth Ahronoth*, said: "In Israel the estimate is that in the shortest time, measurable in days, war is likely to erupt between Iraq and the multinational force in Saudi Arabia." Israeli press reports said some Iraqi missiles were targeted on Israel.

The cabinet discussed "the subject of protection for the civilian population", a reference to the issuing of gas masks, but decided that Mr Shamir would establish a "special sub-committee" to deal with the matter. The decision was a blow for David Levy, the foreign minister, who has been demanding the distribution of protective equipment.

Moshe Arens, the defence minister, yesterday appointed General Yaakov Lapidot to the newly created post of adviser on civil defence. Officials said the new post

reflected "Mr Arens' concern that Israeli civilian centres might become targets."

Do-it-yourself masks: Israeli supermarkets yesterday reported that they had all but sold out of baking soda, described in civil defence manuals as an antidote to poison gas. The manuals suggest that a makeshift gas mask can be made by soaking a cloth in baking soda, which allegedly helps to neutralise the acid substances used in chemical weapons. The newspaper *Davar* said baking soda sales were up 500 per cent.

Israeli strategic experts believe Iraq could deliver chemical weapons to Israeli territory only by using aircraft or artillery, which Israel can prevent. But some experts believe Iraq may have put small quantities in missiles.



Traveler's prayer: an Egyptian refugee from Kuwait performing his devotions among queues of cars at the crowded port of Aqaba as he waits for a ferry home

AQABA

Torrent of refugees could swamp Egypt

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER

AN ANGRY and thirsty crowd of several thousand Egyptians surged across the desert highway between Aqaba and the Iraqi border, blocking all traffic and throwing stones at cars and lorries that tried to pass.

"We have just been told we have to wait here 48 hours more before we can get a ferry to Egypt. We have no food and hardly any water," shouted one protester on Sunday. "Where is the Egyptian government? Why are they not doing something for us?"

It was the latest outburst of frustration among the unswerving victims of the Gulf confrontation, Egyptian refugees who in the next few weeks could number hundreds of thousands. Figures provided in

Jordan yesterday showed there were still 150,000 Egyptians in occupied Kuwait and 1.6 million in Iraq, most wanting to leave.

Many of those travelling for more than four days to reach the outskirts of Aqaba have made the journey in rusty cattle lorries. A senior Aqaba port official said at least one Egyptian had been crushed to death in stampedes to board the ferries provided to transport the exodus to the Sinai port of Nuweiba. It is feared others will die of thirst and malnutrition.

At Nuweiba, the Egyptian ministry of supply has pledged to provide 15,000 light meals a day and free transport to all parts of Egypt. But travellers claimed there was a lack of resources and organisation.

The growing queue of Egyptian refugees is a pathetic side-effect of the Gulf tension. For President Mubarak, the flow of Egyptians struggling to return represents a potential economic and political time-bomb.

With Iraqi intelligence co-operating with radical Palestinian groups in an attempt to subvert Mr Mubarak's pro-Western regime, the refugee stream could provide a cover for infiltrating agents.

Equally dangerous is the threat posed to Egypt's ailing economy by the arrival of hundreds of thousands of workers, without money and with little prospect of finding jobs or homes. Unemployment in Egypt is already estimated at 20 per cent.

The influx is likely to cause

serious social problems and undermine stability. The returning refugees also represent a blow to Egypt's depleted exchequer. Repatriated earnings of Egyptians working in the Gulf have been the backbone of Egypt's foreign-exchange income, and some economists believe the present annual level of remittances of about \$2.5 billion (£1.3 billion) could be cut in half.

On the other hand, economists predict Egypt, the most populous Arab nation, will gain from increased oil revenues of \$2 million or more a day, and possible windfall profits from the extra use of the Suez Canal. There is a rising expectation that Washington will feel obliged to write off Cairo's \$4.5 billion military debt.

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BRITAIN

Kinnock endorses Thatcher's moves on Gulf emergency

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND DANIEL TREISMAN

NEIL Kinnock, the Labour leader, yesterday offered the prime minister almost unqualified support for the government's handling of the Gulf emergency. His comments came as Mrs Thatcher condemned as a "scandal" the treatment of British hostages in the Gulf and said thousands of Arabs and Asians were fleeing Iraq in fear of its dictator.

In his first public pronouncement on the military build-up triggered by President Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait, Mr Kinnock's remarks suggested that he and his senior colleagues have learned from the Falklands conflict. Then, under the leadership of Michael Foot, Opposition spokesmen regularly questioned the use of military force to recapture the islands and were undermined by the left wing calling for a truce with Argentina. The result of this hesi-

tancy and internal disarray was an 18-point rise in public support for the Conservatives and an electorally irreversible slump in Labour's standing in opinion polls.

If anything, Mr Kinnock reinforced the bipartisan spirit that has so far marked most domestic political reaction to the pressures the government is applying to the Iraqi leader.

On the British hostages, he said that everything that could be done for them was being done. He endorsed the prime minister's refusal to bargain with President Saddam over their fate, and refrained from demanding an immediate recall of parliament. He also supported the government's moves to win a comprehensive United Nations mandate for Western action in the Gulf, questioning only the slow pace at which it had moved to gain international authority for the naval blockade.

Speaking during a visit to

the Canary Wharf development in London's Docklands, Mrs Thatcher said she was "deeply upset" by Iraq's behaviour towards Britons held there. "They are entitled to be there," she said. "Our nationals should be looked after very well indeed. It's a scandal the way they have been treated."

Mr Kinnock, making clear that he saw no advantage in harrasing ministers when servicemen had been dispatched to a potential war zone, said: "It's an unprofitable exercise when our forces are engaged, when they are taking defensive action in support of independent and peaceful countries against an aggressor, for us to be looking around for points of difference."

The Labour leader, speaking on BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*, also indicated that, had he been in power, he would have responded in much the same way as Mrs Thatcher.

Like Mrs Thatcher, while sympathising with the "anxiety" of friends and relatives of the 4,500 Britons trapped in Kuwait and Iraq, Mr Kinnock was adamant that no concessions could be made to their captors.

Later, after opening an £18 million window factory and office complex in Braintree, Essex, the prime minister expressed her sympathy for the families of hostages trapped in the Gulf. "They're always in our thoughts in everything we do. This is one reason we are keeping our ambassadors there so that they will do everything possible."

She flatly rejected a claim by an Iraqi envoy in Geneva that "British colonialism" was responsible for tension in the Gulf. "How absolutely absurd. The trouble is Saddam Hussein marched in and invaded another country and took it by force. That is the root of the whole trouble and we must never forget it," she said.

"There are thousands and thousands of people - Arabs, Indians and Asians - streaming out of Iraq to get away from the present dictator, going into Jordan. That tells you everything."

Britain supplies protective suits

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

AMERICAN armed forces are buying British "doom suits" to protect them from chemical attack in the Middle East, it emerged yesterday as mass production of the garment was ordered by the defence ministry in London.

Orders of up to two million from several countries involved in the Gulf confrontation are anticipated by British Aerospace, which has been appointed by the defence ministry as co-ordinating contractors.

But sources in the industry, who are gearing up to double their output to nearly 500,000 a year, fear they may not be able to meet the demand from governments in the Gulf should a decision be taken to protect civilians within range of chemical attack from Iraq.

It was confirmed by the industry that the British government would have to decide who should get them first. American forces are conducting field trials of the suits and a tacit admission of their superiority over US suits by the US Defence Department is expected to lead to large orders for the Mark 4 version now issued to British servicemen. Some American soldiers are already said to have been equipped with them and a number have the Mark 3 version, but most have American chemical protection outfits.

The three British companies licensed to make the NBC (nuclear, biological and chemical) suits for supply to the Ministry of Defence through BAe are: Remploy, of Cricklewood, northwest London, which specially employs disabled people; the Compton Webb Group of Newport, Gwent, which is a subsidiary of Coats Vytella; and Avon Industrial Polymers of Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire.

The manufacturers, and another five companies which make material for the suits, are believed to be taking on up to 15 per cent more staff or re-allocating other employees. Round-the-clock shiftwork is expected in some cases and sub-contractors may be called in to increase production. Some British suits could eventually be made under licence in the United States.

Already the Saudi air force and some key civilians have received 10,000 suits and gas masks, and newspaper advertisements in Saudi Arabia could lead to requests for more.

The Mark 4 suit, which costs up to £200 including the \$10 respirator and accessories, is pressure- and vacuum-packed by the manufacturers to give it an extended shelf life of six years.

In use against chemical attack it provides a high degree of protection for a minimum of 24 hours, though human tolerance of the heat stress it engenders in temperatures over 100F may not be longer than 30 minutes.

Scientists have criticised the long-term efficacy of the suit in such heat against Iraq's known arsenal of mustard gas which can take a long time to disperse and the nerve gases tabun and sarin. Dr Alastair Hay, a chemical pathologist from Leeds University and chairman of an academic working party on chemical and biological warfare, said: "People will just overheat. You must sweat to cool yourself and if you can't get rid of your moisture - if it doesn't evaporate - your body cannot cool. Your body temperature

will be raised and you and your respiratory system become very disorientated before you collapse."

The latest Mark 4 NBC suit consists of two layers of material: a flame resistant modacrylic nylon, non-woven outer layer, and a charcoal-impregnated fabric, developed at the chemical defence establishment at Porton Down, Wiltshire, forms the inner lining.

The suit, which is shower-proof, can be torn but may be repaired with army issue repair kits which contain six self-adhesive PVC patches.

There is a large front-flap pocket and a sleeve patch for locating detector paper which indicates chemical attack.

The American chemical protective outfit is slightly heavier and consists of a charcoal-activated cloth with a nylon/cotton twill outer layer.

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Doom suit: a test run for the British-made nuclear, biological and chemical outfit and respirator that will protect troops in the Middle East



Susan Silahito, from London, who flew out from Baghdad yesterday, is hugged by her son Jonathan, aged four, on arriving at Amman airport. Passengers said Westerners on the flight wept and sang as they left Iraq

Jesse Jackson seeks TV coup with plan to visit Baghdad

From SUSAN ELLICOTT IN WASHINGTON

WHEREVER there are international television cameras the chances are that Jesse Jackson, the fiery preacher and civil rights leader, is never far behind. The Gulf is no exception. Mr Jackson, hardly a wallflower when it comes to self-promotion, has announced plans to visit Iraq as a journalist in time for the autumn launch of his own syndicated chat-show.

America's television networks will watch his progress with wry smiles - and certain rage if he succeeds where they have failed.

Despite a frenzy of international telephone calls and attempted string-pulling, only two networks, ABC and CBS, can boast they got crews inside Iraq. Neither got close to President Saddam Hussein, but at least one had the

decency to admit the Iraqi leader had only invited them to export his message to the rest of the world.

Admittedly, ABC's anchorman for *Nightline*, Ted Koppel, beat rival CBS's veteran newshound, Dan Rather, by a day last week in what was held as a significant coup in one of America's most upright industries.

The viewer ratings of Koppel's network soared after he sent back a 50-minute tape of an interview with Iraq's foreign minister. Rather, who interrupted a holiday in France to cover the confrontation, fought back this week with footage of himself chatting to a handful of Americans among the thousands of foreigners unwillingly trapped in Baghdad and Kuwait.

The two correspondents left somewhat unceremoniously. Koppel was "invited" to leave Iraq last week and is now working from Jordan. Iraqi officials ordered the CBS team to leave yesterday, telling them they had "outstayed their welcome."

This may have assumed the pique of those networks which failed to deploy their troops any nearer to Baghdad than Cairo, Amman and other Arab cities during the biggest breaking news story since the US invasion of Panama last December. America's highly competitive television networks bicker at the best of times, but the Gulf hostilities has pushed their rivalry to new heights.

Their chief handicap is a lack of action in the Middle East as most details about

tanks, troops and tactics emerge from Washington. It is unclear whether Mr Jackson will pull off his intended trip. The United States has warned all Americans to avoid travelling there until further notice.

Mr Jackson, however, has already found his way into newspaper headlines by claiming that the Bush administration is seeking to thwart his trip. The State Department, citing its travel advice, has said the Democratic politician is free to decide his own plans.

Meanwhile, the executive producer of the forthcoming *Jesse Jackson Show* has said he has "every indication" that Iraqi officials who invited Mr Jackson to Baghdad will allow the civil rights leader to interview President Saddam. This truly would be a stunt to ruffle the egos of America's television hotshots. Not even Koppel and Rather saw the leader, whom President Bush describes as a modern Hitler.

Many of Mr Jackson's detractors have viewed his plans as a further example of the politician's desire to maintain a high profile, coming only months after he travelled to South Africa at the time of Nelson Mandela's release. Mr Jackson has responded by saying that "it was not appropriate to go there (Iraq) as a diplomat". Six years ago he went to Syria to help negotiate the release of a US pilot captured by Syrian troops.

Mr Jackson has twice run unsuccessfully for the Democratic presidential nomination and is now campaigning for a "shadow" Senate seat formed by the District of Columbia to lobby Congress for statehood for Washington.

A journey to the Gulf should at least guarantee him more attention than he received last week at a news conference he called to urge the government to do more for minorities in its bailout of the nation's building societies. Only one reporter showed up.

BAGHDAD

French are 'more comfortable' than Britons and Americans

From MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

FRENCH civilians in the human shield around Baghdad's nerve centres will be more comfortable than their British and American counterparts, according to Palestinian sources.

Small groups of French have been moved into the houses of senior Iraqi army officers, where, the sources said, they would find a home from home, with Perrier and pâté - as long as stocks last. For these small mercies, they can thank Yasser Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, who interceded on their behalf with President Saddam Hussein, the sources said.

"The government eases everything for Saddam's army to keep them loyal," a

Palestinian journalist in regular contact with Baghdad said. "The colonels and brigadiers live a life of luxury and get all the best food and facilities. They have been told to share this with their French guests."

He said British and American hostages who have been moved to military installations in Baghdad are housed fairly comfortably because they are living with Iraqi families whose work is essential to the war machine.

Last weekend the Iraqi leader said that the army and those involved in its service industries would get the best food, in terms of quantity and quality, while others, Iraqis and Westerners, would get the rest and be the first to suffer from sanctions. While some

Britons are reportedly being used as human sandbags around the Iraqi leader's presidential palace and other vital targets, others were carrying on as best they could. Seven Britons employed by Giant Engineering, of Reading, have been going to work every day, according to Andy Konaris, the wife of one of their Cypriot colleagues.

Her husband has told her by telephone that Baghdad did not appear to be fearful of an imminent American attack. One of her husband's friends who was working at a remote site outside the Iraqi capital heard of the emergency only on Monday. Mrs Konaris said: "He has no English, so I suppose he couldn't understand the radio."

WASHINGTON NOTEBOOK by Martin Fletcher

Envoy on a vain chat-show mission to explain

There is not the slightest doubt who is the single most unpopular man in Washington. He is Mohamed Sadiq al-Mashat, the uncouth Iraqi ambassador who appears on every other chat show to proclaim his country's love of peace and to denounce American belligerence.

Dr al-Mashat arrived here from London last autumn declaring his priority was to court the press and reverse a torrent of unflattering reports about his country. It was a campaign doomed to failure. He began by "categorically" denying allegations that Iraq had used chemical weapons against its Kurdish population. That ended when President Saddam Hussein himself acknowledged their use.

Iraq was then rumbled in its attempts to buy nuclear trigger devices and steel tubes for a giant gun. It banged a British journalist. It declared its intention of "burning" half of Israel if attacked. Just before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the US banned the export of advanced industrial furnaces capable of making parts for missiles and nuclear weapons. That provoked this furious press release from the unlovely ambassador: "Iraq needs these furnaces to purify, melt and cast metals to be used in producing artificial limbs

for the thousands of unfortunate people who lost limbs during the eight-year war with Iran, and finds it most inhumane to prevent or delay the acquisition of equipment that will be used for their benefit. The government cannot stress enough how urgent the need is among its physically handicapped, to whom artificial limbs will spell the difference between hopeless existence and a happy, productive life." Tell that to a Kuwaiti.

Washington's latest theory is that the administration arranged the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait to solve a Savings and Loan scandal so serious that it was threatening Mr Bush's very presidency. The collapse of the Texas real estate market bankrupted umpteen S&Ls (building societies) which had invested in highly speculative development projects in the 1980s. This set off a nationwide chain reaction. The administration is now trying to sell the S&Ls' assets to finance its bailout programme, but succeeding only in flooding the property market and depressing prices still further. The ultimate cost of the bailout is a staggering \$500 billion (£260.4 billion). Now just suppose there was a way of suddenly reviving the oil-based economy of the Lone Star state.

More seriously, the Iraqi invasion almost certainly saved both Richard Cheney, the US defence secretary, and the Pentagon budget which he had so poorly defended from congressional attacks that his head was on the block. In fact, his stock has rarely been higher than today. It was he who finally persuaded Saudi Arabia to take the momentous step of requesting US military help. It is he who presided over the biggest military deployment since Vietnam with scarcely a hiccup. He is in many ways a remarkable man. Despite three mild heart attacks and coronary by-pass surgery, he has spent the days since the Iraqi invasion jetting furiously between Washington and moderate Arab states. When he met US troops in Saudi Arabia last weekend the temperature was 104F.

The Pentagon is meanwhile advertising for one particular specialist that it desperately needs to help its troops in Saudi Arabia. The Armed Forces Pest Management Board requires an expert in poisonous desert snakes. As if the threat of Iraqi poison gas is not enough, US troops must also watch out for at least 10 species of dangerous-to-deadly snakes in the Saudi desert, including the Egyptian cobra, the saw-scaled viper, the desert black snake, the puff adder and the Arabian bull viper.



At the best of times he plays what his aides call "aerobic golf" - a reference to his habit of charging round courses at breakneck speed, scattering those before him. Last week, with world affairs pressing in on him, he managed 18 holes in

one hour and 42 minutes, nine minutes faster than his previous record and half the time it takes most lesser mortals.

Whether he is enjoying his sport this year is another matter. Clearly feeling the strain of events in the Middle East, he snapped at reporters who tried to question him between holes the other day. "I hope you'll understand if I, when I'm recreating, will recreate. And then when we're working, which I'm trying to do up here also, I'll work hard," he declared in classic Bushspeak.

There was more vintage presidents on Monday. Discussing why he had abandoned his reluctance to call Americans in Iraq and Kuwait "hostages", Mr Bush suggested: "It's semantical."

Postscript: as thousands of marines prepared to leave for Saudi Arabia last week, the chapel of their base at Twentynine Palms in California performed no fewer than 33 weddings, more than five times the average. On Monday Mr Bush spoke of Airman First Class Wade West. Recalled from leave on August 7, he had married and left for the Middle East within an hour. As the president observed: "You talk about a guy that gets things done."

Envoys ready for embassy closure

By MICHAEL KNIFE
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

WITH Iraq's deadline for the closure of foreign embassies in Kuwait now just 24 hours away, diplomats were presumed yesterday to be destroying their most sensitive files and preparing to smash their cypher equipment in readiness for the threatened action.

Whitehall sources said that if Iraqi officials attempted to enter the British embassy, Michael Weston, the ambassador, could be expected to inform them that they were violating diplomatic immunity but he was not expected to resist physically. The diplomatic staff of eight with two support staff is expected to be reduced to four by tomorrow morning.

The Iraqi tactic might be to simply cut off the embassy's facilities or, indeed, to do nothing initially, said the sources. The Iraqis have indicated that from tomorrow they will no longer recognise the diplomatic status of foreign officials in Kuwait.

Yesterday, Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, confirmed the government's commitment to keeping the British embassy open.

Similar determination has been expressed by Britain's EC partners, and the American and Polish governments. In the final analysis, if the Iraqis decide to evict the diplomats there is little that can be done to stop them. However, Baghdad may be content to allow diplomats to continue their activities without formal diplomatic cover.

Yesterday, Iraq reneged on an offer by its official in Kuwait to release more than 650 citizens of seven EC countries.

Italy disclosed the offer, made apparently by Iraqi officials in Kuwait on Sunday, to let the citizens of Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Greece, the Netherlands and Spain leave for Jordan or Turkey via Baghdad. Iraqi officials in Baghdad later told Belgian diplomats that there was no such offer.

However, late yesterday Saadi Mehdi Saleh, the Speaker of the Iraqi parliament said Iraq would free some of the 1,000 French and Japanese nationals trapped in Iraq and Kuwait in an attempt to stop them "trailing behind the irrational American stand against Iraq".

In Kuwait, Mr Weston and his staff continued to demand consular access to the 10 Britons rounded up at gunpoint by the Iraqi authorities and the other 127 being held by the Iraqis at both military and civilian installations.

Of those seized, 21 are believed to be held at military installations. Four of the 10 Britons rounded up at gunpoint were a couple and their two young children, it was later disclosed.

A foreign office spokesman said the whereabouts of about 97 of the hostages were known.

Speaking on the BBC's Today programme yesterday, Mr Hurd said: "So long as we have citizens held there as hostages, we must do our utmost to keep our own folk there, someone in touch with them. We do not want to use force, we want the UN Security Council's resolutions to work."

But if western hostages were harmed, the situation would have to be reviewed, he said.

11-month baby is hostage

By KERRY GILL

ONE of the hostages seized by Iraqi troops in Kuwait is a baby aged 11 months, it emerged last night.

Matthew Buchan was taken with his brother Christopher, aged three, and his parents, David and Rose Buchan, to a hotel in Kuwait city. Mr Buchan has been working in the country for three years as an administrative manager for the Aberdeen-based Wood Group.

The company said: "We are really concerned. Our fear is that they could be used as human sandbags. We haven't had confirmation of exactly where they are. The family of the Buchans is deeply distressed and just waiting by the phone for news."

The family, who come from Peterhead, Grampian, were seized with their neighbours, Andrew and Carolyn Stephenson, whose home is in Aberdeen.

The first their relatives knew of the detentions was a call from the Foreign Office yesterday to the mother of Carolyn Stephenson, who also lives in Aberdeen.

Proposals to harmonise EC speed limits rejected by peers

By RICHARD FORD
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PROPOSALS to harmonise speed limits for buses, coaches and goods vehicles throughout the European Community and exempt certain people from wearing seat belts are rejected today by a House of Lords committee.

The peers question whether the European Commission has the power to introduce the measures which would cut motorway speed limits on many commercial vehicles and coaches but slightly increase limits in built up areas. The report urges the commission to concentrate instead on producing common standards of vehicle construction and similar road traffic signs.

The report says that it fears that "bunching" could increase because of the lower speed limits leading to more

accidents and traffic offences and a rise in transport costs. Lower speed limits on motorways and dual carriageways would increase journey times for the road transport and freight industries and worsen their competitive position relative to other forms of transport.

Under the commission's proposal to harmonise speed limits for buses, coaches, and goods vehicles, most British limits would be slightly reduced or left unchanged. The speed limit for light vans on a single carriageway road would be 50mph instead of the present 60mph, on dual carriageways 50mph instead of 70mph and on motorways 62mph rather than 70mph. The limit for buses and coaches on dual carriageways

would be cut from 60mph to 50mph and on motorways from 70mph to 62mph. The peers also reject a proposed list exempting people from wearing seat belts in cars. It would include children under the age of 12 sitting in the rear of cars, drivers and adult front seat passengers under 1.5 metres, and pregnant women. The committee said: "It would be a serious retrograde step to exempt children from wearing seat belts or other restraints in the front and rear (where fitted) of cars. Nor should drivers and adult front seat passengers under 1.5 metres tall be excluded. The protection offered by the standard adult seat belt is preferable to no protection at all."

The most important matters to be resolved concerned the endorsement of licences and the disqualification of road traffic offenders and this would involve mutual recognition of sentences and convictions as well as the harmonisation of large parts of EC road traffic laws. The report by the Lords select committee on European communities also highlights the civil liberties implications of a common EC driving licence which included a photograph of the holder. While the balance of evidence to the committee was that the benefits to road traffic law enforcement outweighed the potential effects on civil liberties, the report says the resemblance to a state identity card might arouse sensitivities in Britain.

Meanwhile, doubts about the speed of the withdrawal of revenue support for British Rail passenger services and the effect on traffic congestion were expressed yesterday in a report by the Commons transport select committee which called for an overhaul of urban transport systems. The report also criticised the transport department for giving no indication of the projected level of road traffic growth to 2025 for which it planned to cater, and said that imbalances between capital spending on national and local roads would lead to greater congestion in conurbations.

The report urged the department's next annual report to provide a "green audit" on a range of environmental concerns including estimates of carbon dioxide emissions per year from the transport sector, the numbers and proportions of vehicles using leaded and unleaded fuel, and similar figures for vehicles fitted with catalytic converters and cars with low, medium and high engine capacities. The committee supported a measured expansion and improvement of the national and local road system to ease the worst cases of congestion. "Capital investment is needed to overhaul our urban transport systems and to make them effective and efficient," the report said, adding that there was a "renaissance" of public transport which would gather pace as a result of congestion and greater environmental awareness.

Road Safety in the Community. House of Lords select committee on the European Communities. 18th report. 25.85. *The Community Driving Licence.* House of Lords select committee on the European Communities. 23rd report. 28.65. *The Government's Expenditure Plans for Transport 1990-91 - 1992-93.* Transport Committee 2nd report. 13.25. All available from Stationery Office.

Main credit agencies face court action over data use

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

THE four main credit reference agencies are to face legal action brought by the Data Protection Registrar for failing to stop passing information to lenders about individuals who are not seeking credit.

The registrar's office estimates that the credit rating of 100,000 people a year is affected because information on other individuals is supplied in connection with their application. Some are refused credit because family members or previous occupants of the same address have a poor credit record.

The decision to proceed with legal action is likely to be announced early next week by

Eric Howe, the registrar. Last month Mr Howe's office issued preliminary notices, the first step in the use of its statutory enforcement powers, to the four main credit reference agencies, CCN Systems, Infolink, Westcott Data and Credit and Data Marketing Services.

The agencies' 28 days in which to argue why Mr Howe should not proceed to issue a formal enforcement notice, the start of legal proceedings under the Data Protection Act 1984, expired on Tuesday.

Yesterday the Data Protection Office said: "We are close to taking a decision and expect to make a statement in the early part of next week."

Bail bias alleged for ethnic minorities

ETHNIC minority defendants are more likely to be refused bail, according to a report by the Commission for Racial Equality published today (Frances Gibb writes). It says Home Office statistics suggest "that disproportionately larger numbers of innocent ethnic minority people may be held in custody than white people".

Peter Sanders, chief executive of the commission, said that recent figures indicated that 15.1 per cent of the male prison population and 25.7 per cent of the female prison population were from ethnic minorities, a higher proportion than that of ethnic whites in the country generally. "These are deeply disturbing statistics," he said.

Part of the problem was that too many people were held in custody when they should more properly be released on bail because they had no fixed abode, and it was feared that they might abscond. "People from ethnic minority communities are disproportionately affected by homelessness and this may account in part for the high rates of remand in custody."

The commission calls for a "rigorous new drive" to ensure ethnic minority defendants stand an equal chance of getting bail. In particular courts should monitor their decisions on whether to grant bail to ensure there is no discrimination. It welcomes a Home Office decision to increase the number of bail hostels, which it says will help to resolve the issue.

There must also be a clear policy of non-discriminatory practice by the courts, crown prosecution service, those running bail information schemes and probation officers when referring defendants to bail hostels, the commission says.

Bail Hostels and Racial Equality (Commission for Racial Equality, Unit House, 10-12 Allington Street, London SW1E 5EH. £1)

At present when a lender asks credit reference agencies for information on an individual, the agencies search their files on the basis of the current or old addresses quoted by the applicant, or even on the basis of similar addresses.

A lender may receive not only information about the credit records of all members of an applicant's household, but also similar information about the occupants now living at the applicant's previous addresses. The lender might even receive credit records of others in the neighbourhood.

The credit reference agencies defend their practice and do not believe it is a breach of the law. Elizabeth Stanton, of the credit industry forum on data protection, said that data given to lenders, even if not directly relating to the credit applicant, is "statistically predictive" and "of some weight when assessing the probability of a person's repaying a loan".

Mr Johnson's backing of the unofficial action by the offshore industry liaison committee came as the group accused Chevron, which on

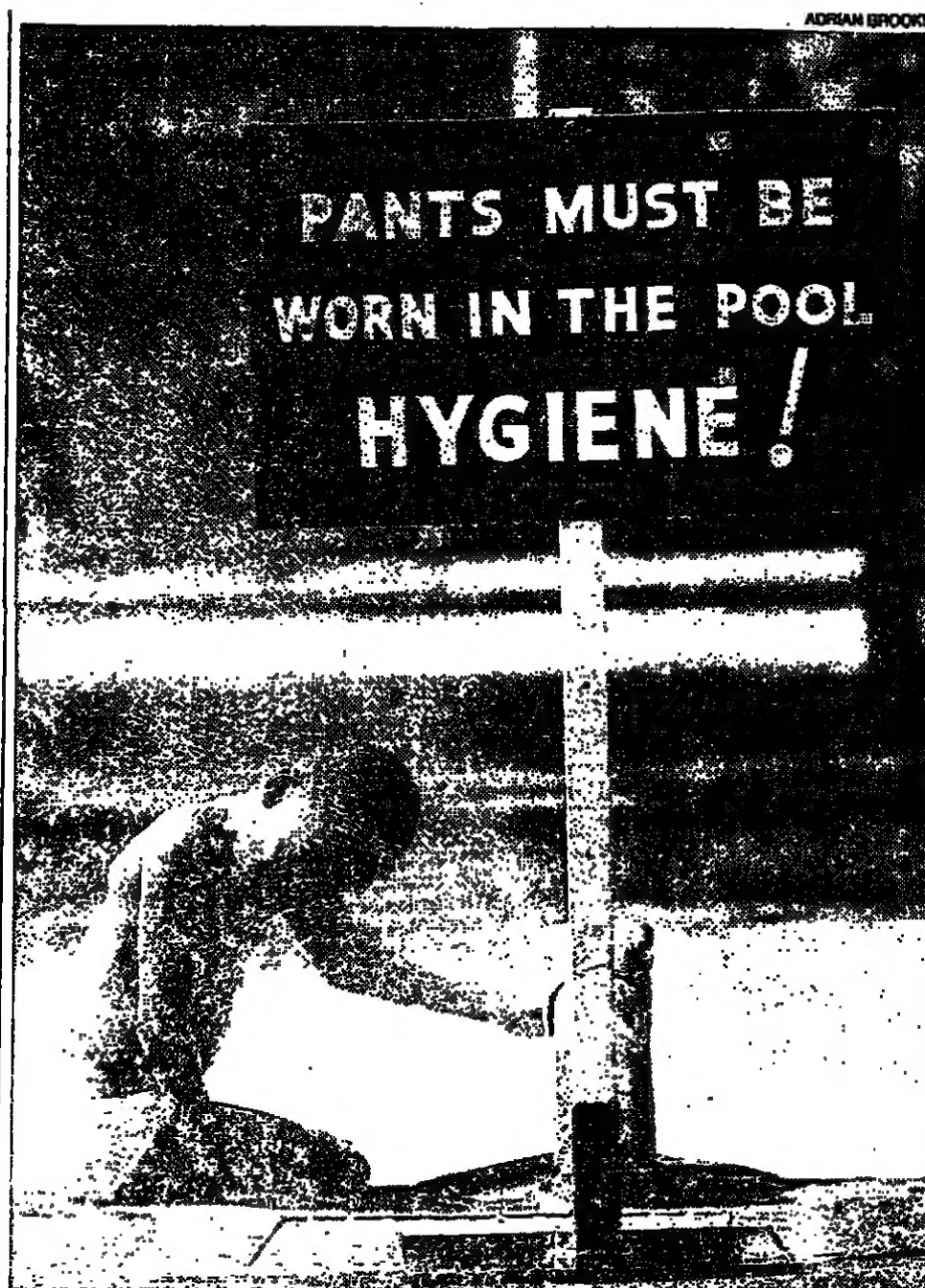
Norwegians back rig strikes

By KERRY GILL

ORGANISERS of the wildcat strikes that have affected the North Sea oil and gas industries were yesterday given the moral support of the Norwegian Oil and Petrochemical Workers' Union (Kerry Gill writes).

Terje Johansen, national secretary of the union, which represents 7,500 men working in the Norwegian sector of the North Sea, said that he was shocked by some reports of safety problems in the UK sector. The Norwegian government encouraged employees to be involved in platform safety issues. "I think it about time you had the same philosophy in Britain," he said in Aberdeen.

Mr Johnson's backing of the unofficial action by the offshore industry liaison committee came as the group accused Chevron, which on



Staying cool: a boy escapes the heat at a pool in Coram's Field Park, Camden, during yesterday's London Playday, organised by officials and volunteers

DIY store shatters ageist myths

By TIM JONES, EMPLOYMENT CORRESPONDENT

ANOTHER blow in the battle against ageism will be struck tomorrow when Vic Connell and his wife Maggie become the manager and administrative manager of a B&Q DIY store being opened in Exmouth, Devon.

The couple, both aged 59, will not be intimidated by bright young bloods plotting their downfall for all the other 35 employees in the store will have lived for at least half a century. B&Q has moved to counter the threat of a dwindling labour market by encouraging older workers to apply for jobs.

Last year, the company became the first in Britain to

open, in Macclesfield, a store staffed entirely by mature workers. It was so successful that a nationwide advertising campaign followed, which brought more than 7,000 applications.

Later this year, the company will open another store in Cardiff which will also be staffed by the not-so-young. Meanwhile a report to be published next week by the Industrial Society is expected to condemn British companies for ignoring a vital labour source.

B&Q's experience at Macclesfield has shown that the over-fifties have a good understanding of DIY and

made it pointless even to apply for a job. He said one daughter had written to the company saying her mother's life had been changed since getting a job. Mr Connell, who has worked with his wife for 40 years said: "Our staff, who have called themselves the wrinkles, are enthusiastic and raring to go."

Earlier this year, a Gallup survey for the Brook Street employment company said employers were turning their backs on a vast pool of experienced labour by aiming recruitment at workers aged under 35.

Salvaged ivory may fetch £1/4m

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE World Wide Fund for Nature appealed to a Devon salvage merchant last night not to sell a ton of ivory, thought to be worth £250,000, which he has brought up from a wreck in the Channel.

Simon Lyster, the fund's international conservation officer, appealed to Fred Saunders not to sell 86 elephants' tusks retrieved from a wreck which sank in a collision 28 miles off Start Point en route from Africa to Liverpool in 1878.

Mr Saunders said that his haul was probably the only sellable ivory in the world after an international ivory trade ban last year. He researched the wreck for two years and refuses to say where it is.

"The ivory is in storage," he said. "It will take six to eight weeks to sort out the legal situation with the receiver of wrecks and then it will be sold." He has received offers of around £250,000 from Japanese and Belgian dealers.

Mr Lyster said: "It would be extremely detrimental to our efforts to save the African elephant to have a ton of ivory come on the market. We are trying to get people not to buy ivory because it is ivory poaching that has halved the African elephant population over the last ten years."

He said he would be writing to Mr Saunders urging him not to sell.

Stronger steps urged to save landscape

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

STRONGER measures are needed to preserve picturesque landscapes from further serious damage by tourists, farmers and developers, the Countryside Commission said yesterday.

In its first review of the subject in ten years, the commission, which advises the government on rural policy, said that public spending should be doubled on the upkeep and protection of the 7,460 square miles of England and Wales in 38 "areas of outstanding natural beauty".

Officers should be appointed to coordinate conservation with local authorities, and farmers in such areas who restore woodlands and hedgerows or graze cattle and sheep instead of growing crops, should be paid compensation, the commission says.

The commission also said that it was making progress with plans to designate four new areas of outstanding natural beauty: the Tamar and Tavy valleys in Devon and Cornwall, the Niddale Moors in North Yorkshire, the Blackdown Hills in Somerset and Devon, and the Bervyn Mountains in Wales.

Sir Derek Barber, the commission's chairman, said that a more sophisticated management regime was needed to preserve areas of outstanding natural beauty, "these jewels of the country-"

side". He said that the "not in my backyard" attitude to rural development would lead to fossilisation of the countryside.

"We have to find a way of marrying the needs of a thriving rural economy with preservation of natural and wildlife habitats," he said. There was no doubt that areas of outstanding beauty had become the Cinderellas of the countryside, and he believed that the government was sympathetic to increased expenditure. About £4.5 million is spent each year on such areas, only 23 per cent of the amount spent on the ten national parks.

Richard Lloyd, the commission's head of planning, said that conservation efforts should concentrate on a dozen areas of outstanding beauty in the South which are under heavy pressure. He cited the Chilterns, Cotswolds, Malvern Hills and the Lincolnshire Wolds as areas of particular concern. It would be up to local authorities to make out the case for extra spending.

The commission's policy statement was based on an investigation of areas of outstanding beauty by Gerald Smart, head of urban planning at the University of London, and Margaret Anderson, senior lecturer in environmental studies at Wye College.

They said that because of a lack of monitoring they could not quantify the damage suffered by such areas. However, damage by agriculture was reported in most areas; overuse of footpaths and bridleways, crushing of vegetation by off-road driving and obtrusive caravan parks in about half; and disfigurement by mineral workings in a third.

Robin Maynard, countryside campaigner for Friends of the Earth, said that damage to areas of outstanding natural beauty would not be halted unless statutory controls were introduced. "The voluntary approach simply is not working," he said. "Local authorities should have the power to issue landscape preservation orders to prevent the destruction of woodland, hedgerows and other traditional features."

GCSE exam results

GCSE results are published today and the table below gives a provisional breakdown of the national criteria subjects. Entries for all GCSE examinations was down by almost 8 per cent but the 4,245,147 entries in national criteria subjects represented a much smaller drop. Pass rates for the top three grades were well up on last year.

Joint council for the GCSE examinations 1990

Provisional results statistics in national criteria subjects (Provisional results statistics for 1989 in brackets)

	Number	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	8
Art/Design	218,186	12.3	14.6	21.5	18.4	15.7	10.9	4.8	0.8
Blue Skies	224,308	11.2	13.8	20.0	18.2	15.4	10.9	4.8	0.8
Latin	59,177	6.2	11.3	30.3	18.7	15.2	10.0	4.1	0.7
Greek	28,967	5.7	12.0	24.8	21.9	16.3	10.8	4.1	0.7
Classical	15,778	4.7	10.7	23.7	14.2	12.5	3.5	1.7	0.7
Classical	1,222	2.2	21.5	10.2	2.5	1.5	0.2	0.1	0.1
Classical	1,311	2.2	21.5	10.2	2.5	1.5	0.2	0.1	0.1
Comp. Sci.	6,088	17.1	28.0	22.0	12.6	8.1	6.4	4.7	0.8
Comp. Sci.	55,485	6.0	13.3	20.3	17.1	15.1	10.0	4.8	0.8
COT	61,379	6.9	11.6	19.0	17.4	15.9	13.5	6.8	1.1
Economics	156,246	9.0	12.8	17.5	18.9	18.1	13.6	6.8	1.1
English	259,386	8.8	16.8	28.8	22.2	14.7	7.2	4.1	0.8
English Lit.	259,386	8.8	16.8	28.8	22.2	14.7	7.2	4.1	0.8
Home Econ	148,133	6.6	12.7	18.5	20.0	18.2	10.0	4.8	0.8
Geography	273,624	11.2	14.2	22.4	18.3	15.2	10.0	4.8	0.8
History	219,922	12.1	17.0	20.2	18.3	15.9	11.2	6.8	1.1
French	222,476	12.0	16.3	19.6	17.0	14.1	10.7	6.8	1.1
German	82,728	9.4	15.5	15.9	17.9	14.4	11.2	4.2	0.8
Spanish	77,007	22.7	18.1	16.9	16.2	12.0	8.4	3.5	0.8
Maths	24,931	28.3	17.9	15.0	12.3	11.9	10.3	6.8	1.1
Maths	22,303	27.4	17.9	14.9	13.9	10.9	10.9	6.8	1.1
Music	60,851	7.2	9.3	23.7	17.2	17.3	14.0	8.3	1.1
Music	32,403	18.0	21.3	22.5	14.4	17.9	13.9	6.8	1.1
Relig. Stud.	32,443	14.4	21.8	22.7	16.1	16.1	12.9	7.2	1.1
Relig. Stud.	34,696	10.2	15.3	20.2	16.8	14.6	11.4	6.8	1.1
Biology	59,572	9.5	14.2	18.7	17.0	15.1	12.3	6.8	1.1
Chemistry	218,088	11.2	14.2	22.4	18.3	15.2	10.0	4.8	0.8
Physics	201,739	13.4	17.7	22.6	16.4	13.9	10.3	6.8	1.1
Science	224,022	12.9	14.0	22.5	18.7	13.5	8.2	4.2	0.8
Sci. Sci.	262,704	7.1	9.9	23.5	18.4	14.7	10.4	4.7	0.8
Sci. Sci.	171,853	4.5	8.2	20.0	19.9	18.9	13.9	7.2	1.1
All sciences	112,758	7.2	11.7	17.4	15.4	16.6	10.8	11.1	1.2
All sciences	84,854	11.1	13.4	23.5	15.3	13.4	10.4	5.5	0.8
Mod. Langs.	368,444	21.3	15.2	15.3	16.4	13.3	11.4	6.8	1.1
Mod. Langs.	368,807	22.1	15.8	15.8	17.2	13.5	10.8	6.8	1.1

All above subjects grade A=11.1% (10.9%) A-C=45.5% (45.1%) A-D=57.3% (57.1%)

Guinness jury's plea for papers is rejected

The judge in the Guinness fraud trial yesterday refused a jury request to see transcripts of witness evidence. Mr Justice Henry told the jurors: "It would actually be dangerous to give you this mountain of material. I am afraid it might swamp you."

The jurors, who retired on Tuesday to consider verdicts on four defendants at Southwark Crown Court, had asked to see transcripts of evidence from the main Crown witness, Olivier Roux, the former Guinness finance director, and from two other witnesses.

The judge said that there was a risk that, because the jurors were not familiar with the transcripts, they might place emphasis on the wrong points and not take in counter-arguments. However, he told the jury: "You must feel free to ask if you want reminding of anything."

The jurors will today resume deliberations after their second night in an hotel.

Food additive to be banned

FOODS containing a supplement that has been linked to the deaths of 22 people in the United States are to be banned from sale in Britain from September 12, the health department said yesterday.

The supplement, tryptophan, has been used as a food additive to aid body building and to combat insomnia and pre-menstrual tension. The ministry advised people last year to avoid such foods unless medically prescribed.

Naval discipline

Sub Lieutenant Mark Taylor, aged 24, was yesterday fined £500 by a Royal Navy court martial after he admitted bullying a club in May. Earlier, John Merricks, a Navy engineering mechanic, was dismissed from the service and sentenced to three months detention, after admitting three charges of indecently assaulting a rating and exposing him to women.

Pollution fine

An engineering company which poisoned nearly a mile of river in Snowdonia, causing 21,000 fish to die, was yesterday ordered to pay £16,000 in fines and costs at Llanrwst crown court. DMM Engineering Ltd of Llanberis, Gwynedd, was found guilty of two charges of polluting the Afon Caledfyrdd, a tributary of the river Seiont. The court was told that replacing the dead fish could take five years.

Home loan fine

Fulford Financial Services, the finance division of Fulford estate agents of Devon, was fined £7,000 at Barnstaple magistrates' court yesterday for making misleading mortgage offers. The group admitted seven summonses under the Consumer Credit Act concerning interest rate quotations.

Singer's farewell

Exclusive coverage of Doreen Raveland's farewell to the stage performance at the Sydney Opera House this October is one of the highlights of an autumn weekend arts-line-up focusing on ballet, classical music and opera launched yesterday by British Satellite Broadcasting's NOW channel.

£16,500 for suit

A black leather stage outfit worn by the pop singer Michael Jackson on the cover of his album *Bad* was sold for £16,500 by Phillips in London in a sale of pop memorabilia. The purchaser was the Hard Rock Cafe of Los Angeles.

Beer rises

The brewers Greene King yesterday announced price increases of between 7p and 10p for their beers. The Suffolk-based brewery, which controls 300 pubs, blamed inflation for the price rise.

Nuns denied sweet smell of success

By CRAIG SETON

FORTUNE has failed to smile on the Nuns of Our Lady of the Passion since salmonella forced the destruction of 10,000 egg-laying hens that were their only income.

The latest venture by the entrepreneurial sisters, chocolate making, is at a standstill because an obnoxious smell at their convent has been picked up by the luxury product, making it taste "like mothballs".

Officials from the Building Research Establishment, a government agency, visited the sisters' convent at Daventry, Northamptonshire, yesterday to try to detect the source of the bad odour in a former stables converted for the production of high quality chocolate.

The nuns have invested £290,000 in the

new enterprise, which has been at a halt since March. The 13 sisters turned to chocolate production after veterinary officials from the agriculture ministry destroyed their chicken flocks last October when salmonella was detected.

The nuns put aside their vows of meekness and humility and locked themselves in a hen-house in a defiant, but failed attempt to stop the slaughter. They claim the smell that is jeopardising their new livelihood is caused by a damp-proofing material used when the chocolate room was converted.

Sister Catherine, the mother superior, said yesterday: "The smell is rampant and the chocolate picks it up."

"The chocolate is handmade and tasted beautifully, but it now tastes like

mothballs. Everything is at a standstill." Sister Catherine, an American, aged 83, said a chocolate maker from Belgium had visited the convent to teach the nuns his intricate craft and the convent had hoped that by now it would be selling the product for £10 for a 1lb box.

She added: "The compensation we got for the chickens was not much, about £2,000."

"We raised enough money to start chocolate making, but we cannot spend any more. We are running out. We cannot think of any other way of making a living."

She said she had been in touch with the makers and added: "We hope we can solve the problem, but we have called in the Building Research Establishment to see if it can help."

Rights that go awry

Alan Ryan

Like most moderately liberal people of my age, I grew up with a simple, attractive picture of the British constitution. It was happily nowhere written down. Happily, because everything depended on the good sense of politicians and the national genius for compromise. The 18th century had settled that Britain was governed by the rule of law, so we could all do whatever the law did not forbid. And although Parliament could in theory make laws about anything — even declaring it a felony to have red hair or an Irish surname — it could not happen in practice.

Doubts about the glories of the unwritten constitution were met with Mr Ponsnap's rebuttal: foreigners had written constitutions and see what a mess their politics were. The Soviet Union's 1936 constitution handed out all sorts of freedoms to the KGB would kill people for talking to enemies. The de-colonised Third World was littered with torn-up constitutions guaranteeing free speech, free elections, an independent judiciary, and all the freedoms the British had always enjoyed.

The moral was obvious. Countries got as much freedom as the public and their leaders could hang on to. Liberal societies would guarantee themselves the kind of freedom prescribed in the US Bill of Rights or the European Convention on Human Rights. In illiberal societies, politicians would ignore people's written rights, courts would side with politicians, or the rules would be changed.

Over the past decade this has become less and less persuasive. The old British complacency may never have been justified. Today it is clearly quite unjustified. It is embarrassing to say the least that Britain holds the record for cases brought against its government in the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, and the record of adverse judgments there. Worse than this has been the erosion of the familiar Bill of Rights liberties. The 1989 Official Secrets Act subverts the freedom of the press in important cases; police action during the miners' strike was a denial of freedom of assembly; and the Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984 eroded freedom of the person.

The *Spycatcher* trials looked like defeat for the government, but the Law Lords conceded the newspapers' rights to publish only because the book was so well-known that no further damage would be done by publication in Britain. The contrast with the United States since 1971, when *The New York Times* resoundingly won the right to publish Pentagon papers exposing the follies and deceptions of the men who embroiled America in Vietnam, could not be greater.

Cases like this make it necessary to press for a local bill of rights — preferably by incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights into British law.

Rights into British law. I am an early and loyal supporter of Charter 88, but the recent nomination of Judge David Souter to the US Supreme Court has brought on an attack of cold feet. As soon as William Brennan announced his retirement, battle lines were drawn between anti-abortion and pro-choice forces. The right-to-life movement demanded an appointee who would overturn *Roe v. Wade* and return the question of abortion to state legislatures, while their opponents threatened to give any such nominee a rough time in the confirmation hearings.

This is doubly crazy: crazy that the Supreme Court should be so politicised over one issue — and one can see why British judges are against going down the same track — but more to the point, crazy because abortion is the wrong issue for such treatment.

Between those who believe that from the moment of conception the deliberate termination of life is murder and those who believe that a woman has an absolute right over her own body and whatever it contains, there can be no truce. Both dismiss as traitors those who think that society should be hesitant about interfering with what any pregnant woman decides, but who also think society can interfere for the sake of a future child, or to override the mother's judgment if it is self-destructive or even to uphold social values, such as not allowing abortion for sex selection. Yet most of us here and in America are moderates of this kind.

We know we will not convince the extremists. What we hope is that compromises can be struck which keep the extremists out of each other's way. David Steel's 1967 Abortion Act was a classic piece of compromise legislation. It declared abortion criminal — except in some situations. The result is to allow those abortions to which the US Supreme Court decided in *Roe v. Wade* that women have a constitutional right (The US court, meanwhile, had to rely on an already strained reading of the constitution's prohibition of unreasonable search and seizure as a positive right to privacy.)

Creating complicated solutions to messy moral problems is what interaction between politicians and public is meant to achieve. To make too many issues a matter of non-negotiable rights and prohibitions simply encourages the bloody-minded "demands" for one thing and another in which American politics specialises. It also leads to politicians leaving all the difficult decisions to the courts, as increasingly happens in America. What is needed, if only somebody can find the recipe, is a charter of rights that entrenches our liberties without suggesting that everything worth having must somehow be among them.

The author is Professor of Politics at Princeton University.

...and moreover

CLEMENT FREUD

Only parts of our carpet were threadbare; nearly 40sq ft under the bed was in pristine condition, untrod by human foot. And around the walls there was a lot of good stuff, thick pile, springy to the step. In the spare room (where I now have a treadmill and black-and-white television set enabling me to walk for 25 minutes at just over four miles an hour and watch Mr Mosimann doing *la cuisine naturelle*, which last week entailed steaming an egg on a plate with no directions on how to prise it off), the carpet is what the trade would call "as new" but for a stain where Emma split mulligatawny soup while working on her *A-levels*. If I were in second-hand carpets, I would concentrate on those that had adorned spare rooms in flats of unregarded people whose children have left home.

Where the carpet was poor was under the dining table, beneath my desk and on the stairs, especially on the stairs, so I rang my carpet man who had fitted it only 11 years ago, told him that I could be in need of some replacement, certainly quite a bit of repositioning. We made an appointment for him to come and advise, and by the time he arrived I had worked out that to ground 55 per cent would have to go — probably get snapped up by a first-time home buyer at not much less than I paid for it in 1979. Carpet man began with some bad news: the carpet that we had was a discontinued line. Ours was sort of beige, with dark beige and brown streaks; the nearest he could get was oatmeal with hazelnut-coloured splashes.

Could we do the top floor by piecing together the good carpet from all over the flat — and have the floor below covered in the new? He said no.

Was there, I asked, a journal in which we could advertise for the discontinued carpet — surely still stocked in some country warehouse? He thought not.

Might he put me in touch with a merchant who would make a decent offer for all my discontinued carpeting if I replaced it? My carpet man had no knowledge of such people's existence: better carpet than mine is apparently dumped on

London pavements each week. When he left, having remeasured, he promised to ring me with a quote the following day. He did. It was a blow. I waited an hour and rang back, accepting. He said he would not charge for laying it, offered a 5 per cent discount for payment within a fortnight. I told him that he should charge me for laying it; I would be uneasy at the thought of his penny as a consequence of selling me a new carpet. He said he never charged for laying; it was included in the price. I said all right then, agreed to go away for two days while his men fitted it, and promised to leave the place in a suitable state.

Until the weekend I had not considered the mechanics of preparing an apartment for carpeting. In my bedroom there is a huge bed, one dressing and two bedside tables, a tallboy, some chairs and a cupboard. If I put all those into the hall, what to do with the hat-stand, bookcases and wine racks? There was no place for them in the sitting room, which has easy chairs, occasional tables, TV, VCR and Matthew's old music-centre. The only uncarpeted room is the kitchen; the kitchen is full.

In the end I decided to leave everything where it was, filled the refrigerator with Löwenbrau lager for the carpet men, and when they arrived on Monday I apologised for not having done more, gave them the spare keys to the flat and left the country.

I returned to Wimpole Street on Wednesday. There is an air of stuffiness about the apartment, of dust that has come up and not seriously settled down, rather like a Queensway warehouse, only without the SALE notices on the window. But things are in place, more or less where I had left them; the TV has been moved a shade closer to the window, a large pot containing a gargantuan mother-in-law's tongue was on the staircase and is now in my wife's study, and I think the dining table used to be centred beneath the Pappas drawing of Cork. I shall move it back.

What worries me most is that the new carpet is exactly the same as the old carpet: beige, with dark beige and brown streaks.

Martin Fletcher on American pride in confronting Saddam — and disillusion with all but Britain

Glory restored, but what of the cost?

Washington

As it stands on the brink of war with Iraq, the US has put aside the malaise and self-doubt of past months, and is grimly proud still to be the world's policeman. President Bush is enjoying some of the highest poll ratings of any president since Kennedy outpaced the Soviets during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. The Pentagon boasts about a 7,000-mile movement of troops and equipment bigger than the Berlin airlift — almost 500,000 tons to date, equivalent, it is said, to moving the city of Jefferson, Missouri (population 36,000), down to the last car and hamburger.

"All the talk about Japan or Germany being the new number one has faded quickly. The Iraq crisis shows that the US is the only true superpower," declares *The Wall Street Journal*. "The obituaries were premature," proclaims *The New York Times*. "There is still one superpower, and it is the US. Washington is not the backwater that it seemed to some when the action was all in the streets of Prague or at the Berlin Wall."

The strength and value of the Anglo-American special relationship, has also been reaffirmed, and not merely because Britain was the first to back the US military. Mr Bush, whose attitude to Mrs Thatcher was noticeably distant compared with Ronald Reagan's, now appears incapable of mentioning her without an effusion of praise. "Thank God for allies and friends like Margaret Thatcher when the going gets tough," he declared on Monday.

The New Republic, mouthpiece of liberal Democratic opinion, records that "Thatcher's influence was critical" in the immediate aftermath of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. Mr Bush flew to Aspen, Colorado, that day not to fulfil a speaking engagement, but to consult her.

"Thatcher laid out precisely what Bush decided for himself the next day," the magazine reported. A Bush aide who attended the meeting said: "She was a big influence on the basic decision he had to make: what are the US and Western interests in the Gulf, are they long-term or short-term, and are they worth defending? She told

Bush they were towering, long-term and must be aggressively defended." The prime minister, he said, "never flinched".

In contrast to praise for Britain's support there has been a barely concealed dismay at the weakness of other industrialised nations. "This crisis really exposed the hollowing of European pretensions," Bernard Lewis, a Princeton University historian, told *The Washington Post*. There is growing resentment at the "free ride" of Japan and West Germany, America's principal economic rivals. If the American military effort succeeds, they will enjoy reasonably priced oil having borne only a fraction of the US burden.

And burden it will be. Even before the Iraqis invaded Kuwait and the US build-up began, the US economy was on the verge of recession and grievously handicapped by a huge budget deficit. Now the dollar is falling fast. So is the confidence of investors.

Some officials now predict that the military costs and the economic slowdown could result in the largest budget deficit in US history, between \$250 billion and

\$300 billion. The US could soon be an uncomfortable economic testbed in which, for the first time, output will fall at a time when its budget deficit is stuck at around one twentieth of GNP.

Another shadow looms. For the present the administration is heartened by the way things are going. Despite United Nations kidnappings over enforcing the trade embargo, international unity is holding up better than Washington dared hope. So too is domestic support, with polls showing 70-80 per cent public backing, though the congressional process has meant almost no political debate.

The only real dissenters are those conservatives who dislike Arabs and Arab despots, do not believe it is in American interests to fight a foreign war that benefits economic rivals, and believe market forces would ultimately defeat attempts by a victorious Saddam Hussein to jack up oil prices.

Domestic and international support appears solid. But it needs to be. The very success of the international diplomatic action turns the focus of the Pentagon

away from a pre-emptive unilateral attack on Baghdad, for which the US air force has been itching. The more likely military scenario now is a mixed air and ground assault to retake Kuwait — a mission which would take more troops, tanks and marines than are at present in place.

Some military sources say that US forces in Saudi Arabia will be at full strength for such an action in two weeks, others that it will take four times as long.

Today the secretary of state, James Baker, and the White House chief of staff, John Sununu, House report that both the diplomatic and the domestic fronts are under control. But they may have to keep things that way for much longer. When congress returns to Washington, so will the worries of their constituents.

At the centre of those worries sit the prisoners with whom Saddam Hussein hopes to play a cat-and-mouse game with his American enemy. While the applause still rings around the White House for the first act of the Kuwaiti drama, the hostage scenes of the play have only just begun.

To lie, to creep, perchance to smarm, ay, there's the rub

I may have missed it — one cannot read everything — but I have not yet seen a statement from Sir Dennis Walters, Lord Mayhew, Mr Michael Adams and Mr Andrew Faulds explaining that the Iraqi invasion is entirely the fault of Israel. It wouldn't be difficult: after all, everyone knows that Saddam Hussein's real name is Solomon Gluckstein, and his profession Israeli agent. His masters in Tel Aviv gave the word, 30,000 Israeli troops were flown into Baghdad disguised as door-to-door carpet salesmen, and lo! Kuwait is yet another part of the Israeli empire, which will stretch when complete from Calcutta to Hattin Garden.

I feel sure that in these tumultuous days the ancient hope, never abandoned, of the Foreign Office — the hope of seeing Israel erased from the map — has been quietly discussed. I am willing to bet (I shall be able to prove it in 30 years' time when the files are opened) that "position papers" have already been drawn up which advocate a solution based on persuading Saddam to withdraw from Kuwait in return for a free hand (and some discreet help) against the Israelis, while poor Douglas Hurd runs about trying to put salt on the notion's tail.

Ian Mikardo, who had a roughish tongue, was once asked (I think on a radio programme) what were the Foreign Office's real concerns; he replied crisply: "Homosexuality and anti-Semitism."

Tut, Mik went too far, and I am exaggerating as usual. But when I see Saudi Arabia, one of the most abominable and lawless states on earth (it rates only 28 out of 100 in Charles Humana's *World Human Rights Guide*) being touted, not least by Britain, as a pure and enlightened innocent in danger from a tyrant, I do long, in Bill Connor's famous words, for a quiet corner, a handkerchief, an aspistrada and the old leave-ho.

When, and why, did British foreign policy towards the Arab states cease to be one of patronising superiority and become the most creepy subservience? Except for Lebanon and Israel, I cannot think of any country in the Middle East, with the exception of Iraq, a government, which wears boots so dirty that our Foreign Office would refuse to lick them, and lick them enthusiastically and often.

I am not so foolish as to suppose



Bernard Levin attacks Britain's record of kowtowing to the Saudis, a regime as intolerant as Saddam Hussein's

that we should ally ourselves only with nations that can boast a system of perfect democracy; simply being in the modern world involves bedfellows who snore, and not a few who are lousy. But what lasting good has the abnegation of our Arabist governments and civil servants ever brought us?

Did the great oil price rise pass us by because we had been nice to the rulers of the oil states? Did they rush to support us in the Suez folly? When Iran instigated the attempt to murder a British citizen, did the other Arab nations condemn such barbarism? And now, when British citizens were being rounded up for hostages in Iraq, the Foreign Office at first advised them to go dutifully and at once to the place appointed by the Iraqis, carrying one small suitcase. Their predecessors would have advised German Jews in the Thirties to go without fuss to Belsen, and to make sure they brought a pair of striped pyjamas.

What has any of our crawling gained for us, unless you enjoy seeing Arab rulers' princelings, favourites and bastards coming to London for a few weeks' gambling, boozing and whoring?

Turn it round and ask why the

Foreign Office has been so implacably hostile to Israel ever since Israel was founded; in the United States it is a criminal offence to take part in the anti-Israel Arab boycott, in Britain the Foreign Office eased its path. Nor can the Foreign Office, at least with a straight face, maintain that its enmity is a response to Israel's behaviour on the West Bank; shameful as Israeli behaviour has been, it does not approach some of the Arab atrocities, as the Kurds and others would testify.

If you want an example of this incomprehensible and profitless attitude on the part of successive British governments, you have only to go back to 1980 to see how deep the need to cringe and stammer had already become. Re-reading, as I have been doing, the amazing *Death of a Princess* casts a powerful light on the cowardice, as unnecessary as it was appalling, of British foreign policy.

Death of a Princess, written by Anthony Thomas, an experienced author, and screened by ITV, was based on a real event; in the uncivilised satrapy of Saudi Arabia (it is not a whit better today), a man and a woman taken in adultery were publicly killed. The

woman, a princess, was shot; her lover was beheaded. The killings took place in a carpark. Thomas had spent two years investigating the affair; as screened, it was an enquiry presented in dramatic form. In other words, it remained as close as possible to the events of the real killings.

Even before the film was shown, there were demands from Saudi Arabia to cancel the showing, with MPs, mostly the Arabists, joining in. (The ruler at the time was King Khalid, and if he had had his head cut off in a carpark it would have done Saudi Arabia nothing but good.) But that was nothing compared to what happened after the programme went out.

Saudi Arabia came close to breaking off diplomatic relations with Britain; the television company which had screened it was denounced as though it had advocated, or indeed organised, the execution of Princess Anne; international ripples became waves when first the Dutch, then the Americans, proposed to show the film on their own television; and the only minister who kept his head was Whitelaw, who made clear that Britain does, on the whole, have free speech, though he

did not go on to point out that Saudi Arabia does not.

All this was to be expected; the play was a serious attempt to reconstruct a merciless crime, and the noise would have been harmless nonsense had it not been for what followed. For what followed was not one, nor two, nor three, but four apologies by the Foreign Office to Saudi Arabia. And that was not the worst. Among Britain's grovelling there was a stench, not just of a willingness to condone the original crime, nor of a shrug indicating that whatever we might feel about the killing of adulterers in Saudi Arabia it was no business of ours; no, some of the grovelling came close to a fawning admiration of the Saudis' commendable attitude to marital rectitude and the penalty for failing to observe it.

The apologies were accepted; the establishment slandering of Anthony Thomas continued; and Saudi Arabia went on its tyrannical way. That is the nation which now demands that the civilised world defend it against the tyranny of Saddam, so that it can continue unabated the barbarous savagery of its own.

Perhaps we shall have to (see "bedfellows" above), but I hope we can be spared the bit about gallant, democratic little Saudi Arabia and its colourful customs, especially the free entertainment in its car parks.

Framed in Baghdad

Dismissing what it calls "these little local difficulties", the Iraqi ministry of culture is trying to recruit western artists for an international art festival in Baghdad in October under the banner "art for humanity". Britain, America, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are among the countries whose leading artists are being approached.

If prizes worth a total of \$150,000 are not sufficiently tempting, the Iraqis are offering a sure-fire incentive to draw the artists and the crowds: the exhibition, it is stressed, will be graced by the presence of President Saddam Hussein himself. Yesterday the Iraqi Cultural Centre in Tottenham Court Road asked *The Times* if it would like to go along.

Previous exhibitions have attracted more than 1,000 works, and it was a Briton, Lance Smith, who won first prize at the last exhibition, in 1988.

The publicity for the show declares: "Baghdad, the country of peace, welcomes world artists. And Saddam says in an accompanying statement: 'The artist is like the politician; both create life with progressive forms.'"

David Kanikanian, exhibitions director at the centre, says: "We are determined the exhibition will go ahead. It's very good prize money. It's a prestigious event." But he is coy about the identities of the British and Irish artists who have pledged their support. "I cannot give you their names. I will have to get written permission,"

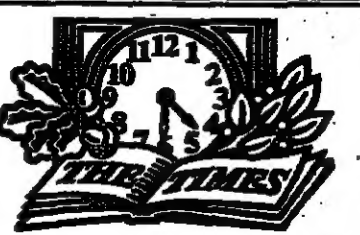
he said. London art dealer Roy Miles is not impressed. "They must be mad," he says. "Only starving artists, tempted by the prize money, would consider going. And none that I have heard of are packing their suitcases yet." The Foreign Office has blunt advice for anyone thinking of going: "Don't."

● *The acceptable face of Saddam Hussein, dressed in a smart western suit, with khaki and machine-gun nowhere in sight, has meanwhile disappeared from the window of the Iraqi Cultural Centre. Was the removal of the beaming photograph a brave act of defiance by Iraqi dissidents? Alas not. 'The frame is being replaced. There is nothing sinister about it,' says a spokesman. 'It will be put back when it is finished.'*

Old Vic stalls

Robert Harris, one of the grand old men of British theatre, has fallen from favour at the scene of some of his greatest triumphs, the Old Vic. The 90-year-old Harris had a distinguished career there in a succession of Shakespearean roles — among them Hamlet, Oberon, Prospero and Henry IV — but last night he was mysteriously refused two previously promised complimentary tickets for Derek Jacobi's acclaimed performance in *Keats*.

Philip Hoare, the company manager, could not say why the invitation had been withdrawn, but Donald Sinden, who had appeared alongside Harris at Stratford-upon-Avon, was perplexed. "He was Mr Old Vic. He played all the great parts. He was one of its greatest actors."



Harris was philosophical as he settled down to an evening in front of the television: "It's a shame and I don't understand it, but after 90 years I couldn't care less."



Caery challenge

For months before Dr George Caery puts on the Archbishop of Canterbury's mitre, his strongly anti-homosexual views are about to be tested by a survey showing 15 per cent of Anglican priests who replied to a survey are gay. The figure is contained in research conducted

by Dr Ben C. Fletcher, a leading occupational psychologist and head of the psychology division at Hatfield Polytechnic. The findings will be published in his book, *Clergy Under Stress*, and debated on Channel 4 next week.

Fletcher says the refusal to allow clergy to maintain homosexual relationships encourages promiscuity and increases stress. "Dr Caery will have to take on board the fact that a sizeable minority of clergy are homosexual, and that a large proportion of them are suffering extreme strain as a result." He thinks the new archbishop should commission a study of sexuality in religion, sponsor an independent, confidential advice and counselling service within the church and be more sympathetic to homosexual vicars in committed long-term relationships.

Both Dr Caery and the present archbishop, Dr Runcie, were sent a questionnaire as part of the survey. Neither replied.

Kapital

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. The fast-fading Soviet communist party has decided that in such times of upheaval it needs a more reliable bulwark against change than Marxism-Leninism. Rather than give up the vast financial resources it has built up in 72 years of unchallenged power, it has decided to set up its own bank, The Kompartbank, and has decided to register as a commercial bank and hopes to make a profit of nearly 5 million roubles in its first year. After the Midland's recent disastrous performance, perhaps it should offer Sir Kit McMahon its expertise.

Shaw sewn up

Literary types attending Michael Holroyd's lecture at the Edinburgh Festival tomorrow might perceive an extra spring in the writer's step and a sparkle in his eye. After 15 years working on his three-volume life of George Bernard Shaw, Holroyd is halfway through the final chapter of the last volume and hopes to complete it within six weeks for publication next autumn. Rather as mountaineers approaching a peak dream of green and grassy plains, Holroyd is planning an escape from all things Shavian.

"I feel extraordinarily relieved that I have been able to complete the course," he says from his west London study surrounded by a ceiling-high mound of documents. "I am going to take a long holiday and behave less responsibly than I have of late."

In recent months Holroyd has been working round the clock to complete the final phase, reading many of the ten letters per day that GBS penned throughout his adult life. He has also toured the world searching for important documents to fill the jigsaw of Shaw's enigmatic character. "When I started I had no idea it would take so long," he says. "But you fool yourself and go on."

Despite his jubilation at reaching the end of a very long road, Holroyd will not be able to shake off GBS just yet. He will spend next month promoting the paperback of the first, prize-winning volume and has still to assemble an appendix covering all three volumes. And the topic of his Edinburgh lecture? What else but "The research and writing of the biography of GBS".

Renewed township fighting claims another 37 victims

From REUTER IN VOSLOORUS, SOUTH AFRICA

FACTIONAL war resumed with new ferocity in South Africa yesterday after the collapse of peace moves brought a night of terror to Johannesburg's battered townships.

Black mobs threw petrol bombs and bricks at peace-keeping security forces in rival factions overnight shot, stabbed or burnt to death at least 37 people, including a baby boy.

Police said 444 people had been killed and more than a thousand wounded in ten days of battles between migrant workers supporting Chief Mangosuthu Buthezi's Zulu-based Inkatha movement and township residents who in the

main support the African National Congress, whose deputy president is Nelson Mandela.

"They come to kill us," said a club-wielding Zulu migrant worker in Vosloorus, where 13 blood-covered bodies lay still smouldering around a migrant workers' hostel.

Vosloorus residents supporting the ANC were furious when it was suggested to them that Mr Mandela should hold peace talks with Chief Buthezi. "Mandela must not talk. We must bulldoze the hostels," one said.

Police blanketed parts of Kagotho township in tear gas as black hordes seeking out migrant workers rampaged through streets strewn with rocks. One mob dragged a policeman from his car and stoned him before being chased off by riot police.

Residents reported tensions extremely high in Daveyton, Katlehong, Tembisa, Tokoza and Soweto, the largest black township where 115 people have been killed so far in the fighting.

Mr Mandela and Chief Buthezi face a growing chorus of demands for talks to end the war, condemned in a statement this week by the Organisation of African Unity. Archbishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town cut short a trip to Canada to try to help end the fighting. "I am a pastor and I have to be with the people," he said at Jan Smuts airport outside Johannesburg. He said any meeting between Mr Mandela and Chief Buthezi would have to be well prepared.

The fighting marks the

spread of the conflict between Zulu Inkatha supporters and those who support the ANC. It has cost more than 4,000 lives in Natal in the past four years.

Chief Buthezi and Bantu Holomisa, a Mandela ally, appealed for peace in a joint statement on Tuesday after talks with senior government ministers. Within hours Chief Buthezi was blaming the ANC for the fighting while Mr Holomisa, military leader of the Xhosa tribal homeland of Transkei, blamed Inkatha and "right-wing police".

Chief Buthezi said in a statement on Tuesday: "The ANC must admit there is an actor called Inkatha... There must be immediate, instant, hot-line communication between all black leaders so that all of them can condemn killing talk." Later he told reporters that although he was a man of peace "a warrior's blood flows in my veins".

The South African Red Cross said more than six hundred refugees daily fled the fighting around their township homes and sought shelter in churches and community centres. The local Red Cross was co-ordinating with the International Committee of the Red Cross to provide blankets and food, a spokesman said.

A teacher in Soweto's Pinville area said: "It's very, very uneasy. There's a strong feeling in the community just to attack the hostels and get the Zulus out of here."

"I look in my children's eyes and I see bewilderment. We think this fighting is going to be long term. Not weeks, or months, but years."



On the frontline: Vosloorus township residents, supporters of the ANC, on the lookout for members of the rival Inkatha movement yesterday

Lebanese power share amendment

Beirut - The Lebanese parliament has amended the constitution to ensure a greater share of power to the country's growing Muslim community and defuse the civil strife (A Correspondent writes).

The parliament, convening with 51 MPs, ratified a series of decrees aimed at restoring peace after 16 years' civil war, including enlarging the chamber from 99 to 108 deputies, with equal numbers of Muslims and Christians.

Ceasefire talks

Freetown - The West African peacekeeping force for Liberia delayed its departure from Sierra Leone pending the outcome of negotiations between the Economic Community of West African States and representatives of the rebel National Patriotic Front on a civil war ceasefire. (Reuters)

Rebels bombed

Colombo - Air force planes bombed Tamil Tiger rebel bunkers in an apparent prelude to a big assault in northern Sri Lanka. Two army battalions numbering up to 2,000 men began moving out of their camps. (Reuters)

Fire danger

Marseilles - About 5,000 residents and tourists were evacuated as forest fires raged along the French Mediterranean coast, firemen said. Ten homes and a camping ground were burnt as flames swept the Calanques hills and reached the suburbs of Marseilles. Fires extended 12 miles between Bormes-les-Mimosas and St-Tropez. (Reuters)

Orders to shoot

Delhi - The Indian army has been told to shoot curfew-breakers on sight in the northeastern state of Nagaland, where more than 50 people have died in clashes between tribesmen with head-hunting traditions. (Reuters)

Korea arrests

Seoul - South Korea announced that 48 people had been arrested, including 10 soldiers, for attempting to topple the government and create a socialist state. The National Police Headquarters said that the 48 had formed an organisation called the Revolutionary Working Class Fighters' Federation. (Reuters)



On trial: Nicu Ceausescu, son of the executed Romanian dictator, listening to defence witnesses after the hearing of charges against him resumed this week. The three children of Nicolae Ceausescu were reunited yesterday for the first time since last December's revolution (Tim Judah writes).

Valentin and Zoe Ceausescu, who await trial on charges of tax evasion and "damaging the national economy", were released from jail last week. Yesterday they came to Sibiu, in Transylva-

Moscow braced for Lithuania border protest

From REUTER IN MOSCOW

A SOVIET KGB commander said yesterday he had moved extra troops and armoured cars to Lithuania's border with Poland to deal with a planned mass drive across the frontier by Lithuanian nationalists.

Lithuania's ruling Sajudis movement, pressing for complete independence from Moscow, has called on Lithuanians to gather at a camp near the Lazdijai border point today and march into Poland in protest against travel restrictions. Activists are also planning to cross from the Polish side.

"Sajudis is trying to take control of the state border," Lieutenant-General Valentin Gaponenko, commander of the Baltic border region, said. "We have reinforced the border guard and deployed extra equipment, including armoured cars."

Lithuania formally declared independence on March 11, insisting it was forced to join the Soviet Union in 1940. Sajudis called the action to demonstrate against continued control by the KGB security forces of Lithuania's borders, airports and main seaport, Klaipeda.

It also marks 51 years since the secret Soviet-German pact that ended the republic's independence. "The crossing

will take place whatever the weather and however many divisions they send," Algimantas Cekulolis, a Sajudis official, said in a television statement quoted in Moscow newspapers yesterday.

"We will drive through (the border point) like a herd of elephants, but nothing need be broken," he said. "What can they do to us? We won't be kicking open just the door to Poland, but the door to the whole of Europe."

Lithuanians and Poles plan a "European cross-border rally" at camps on both sides of the frontier. On the eastern side there will be a Mass and an all-night rock concert. A chain of bonfires will be lit across Lithuania and the two other rebel Baltic states, Estonia and Latvia.

General Gaponenko told the defence ministry news paper *Pravda* Zvezda that extremists planned to destroy border markings. He hinted that his forces would be willing to allow an orderly passage by Lithuanians gathered at Lazdijai, a remote crossing set in gently rolling Lithuanian countryside. "We are prepared to make some concessions on documents. Perhaps on the day people can cross without visas, using just their identity documents," he said.

Supporters were due to begin gathering in tents near the crossing point on Tuesday and yesterday. But a Lithuanian journalist said from Vilnius that heavy rain had kept people away so far.

General Gennadi Bolach, the deputy chief of KGB border forces, was quoted by Tass as saying he would do everything possible to avoid a repetition of scenes on the Soviet Union's southern border with Iran earlier this year.

Striking a blow for 'keep-fat' lifestyle

From SAM KILEY IN LOS ANGELES

AMERICANS are daily entreated to give up smoking and drinking, keep fit, take more exercise and eat less - but the fannies are striking back with their own mini-Olympics.

Now in its fourth year the annual Short and Fat Guys Road Race attracts men of girth from all over the United States and Canada to the hamlet of Crooked River Ranch in Oregon. Competitors "run" the one-mile downhill course from Eyeball Hill to the Sandbagger Saloon and are permitted to be "very liberal about the rules".

Bob Ward, aged 72, the event's organiser, explained that, as race steward, he is laid-back about the event. "Anyone under seven foot is short and fat - provided their waist measurement is four and a half inches more than their inseam (inside-leg measurement). If it is not we just cut their pants off and make them shorter."

The ratio is closely monitored, he said, by the women members of the International Inseam Checkers' Guild who, along with the ethics committee, also ensure that all competitors pull into the compulsory halfway pit-stop where beer and hot buttered sweetcorn is served. They also ensure that all "runners" cross the finishing line at the same time on Saturday morning.

Some forty men are expected to take part in the event. They can make it to the bottom of the hill however they wish. Large numbers in the past have sat in armchairs in the back of pick-up trucks driven by their wives. More athletic competitors are pushed in wheelbarrows or hitch piggy-back rides. Others roll down the gentle incline on a skateboard. But they must all begin and end the race under their own steam.

"We like to see them all cross the finishing line in one impressive, perspiring glob," said Mr Ward, who gives all those who complete the course a glass of beer and a twinkie, a chocolate and cream bun with almost no natural ingredients. Because of a skimpy budget all contestants have the same race number, 102, which keeps the printing bill to a minimum.

"We're tired of looking at tall, skinny, well-muscled guys doing all the sports on TV. It is time to celebrate the short fat man and his contribution to history. Churchill was short and fat. So was Attila the Hun. Genghis Khan did very well, and not a lot of people know that Genghis means short and fat in Mongolian."

Bhutto's foe appointed to head resurgent intelligence agency

From ZAHID HUSSAIN IN KARACHI

THE caretaker government in Pakistan has appointed Major-General Asad Durrani, who was accused by the deposed prime minister Benazir Bhutto as the man who plotted her overthrow, as the head of the powerful inter-services intelligence agency.

General Durrani, who is a former head of military intelligence, has replaced General Shamsur Rahman Kalu, who has retired. His appointment reasserts the army's control over the agency, which not only ran the covert operation in Afghanistan, but was used by the late president, General Zia ul-Haq, to curb political opposition.

While she was in power, Miss Bhutto made substantial changes in the inter-services intelligence agency, which she described as a "state within a state". She sacked General Hamid Gul, the high profile pro-Zia head of the agency, in May last year, and appointed a retired army officer in his place.

Her interference was resented by the military high command, which saw it as an

attempt to split the agency from the army. According to a senior army general, the intelligence agency was an extension of the army, created to work as a clandestine security organisation, and Miss Bhutto's action was aimed at putting it under the civilian control. The issue remained a focus of conflict between Miss Bhutto and the army, and contributed to her downfall.

The inter-services intelligence agency may now be used again as a political instrument, particularly against Miss Bhutto. Changes have also been made in the civilian Intelligence Bureau, and Bhutto appointees have been dismissed. The deputy director, Masood Sharif, was arrested by the army soon after Miss Bhutto's dismissal on August 6.

Meanwhile, the interim government has announced it is setting up special tribunals to try members of the dissolved National Assembly accused of corruption. The tribunal, headed by high court judges, will have sweeping

powers to disqualify any MP found guilty from taking part in the forthcoming elections. Miss Bhutto has refused to appear before a special court. She said that it was a conspiracy to keep her and other leaders of her party from taking part in the elections.

Miss Bhutto was received by huge crowds when she arrived in Lahore earlier this week as a part of a her countrywide tour. She accused the caretaker government of intimidating her party. She is expected to meet General Aslam Beg, the chief of army staff, on August 28.

A Peshawar high court bench is to hear a constitutional petition against the dismissal of Miss Bhutto's government and dissolution of the National Assembly by the president. The petition has been filed by Ifkhar Gilani, the law minister in Miss Bhutto's government.

● Hijackers' trial: The 11 Russians who hijacked an Aeroflot jet and surrendered to Pakistani authorities on Monday will be tried by the local court. They will be

charged with hijacking and possession of illegal arms. The maximum sentence for hijacking under Pakistani law is death.

According to a report, the 11 hijackers, who came from Yakut Soviet Socialist Republic in northern Siberia, appeared before magistrates on Tuesday. Pakistan earlier denied that the hijackers would be extradited to the Soviet Union. Under Pakistani law the hijackers can only be tried locally.

Pressure grows for Bhutan freedom

From A CORRESPONDENT IN KATHMANDU

DRAWING inspiration from the democratic events in Eastern Europe and the success of the pro-democracy movement in neighbouring Nepal, the opposition to King Jigme Singye Wangchuk's government in Bhutan is increasingly demanding democracy.

The exiled Bhutan People's party announced in Kathmandu yesterday it was calling for demonstrations beginning on August 26 against the "despotic" regime, demanding freedom, democracy and human rights. The party said the regime had suppressed the people and blatantly violated human rights.

The party submitted a memorandum to the king on July 2 demanding democracy, but the government in Thimphu, the capital, seems determined not to give in to the demands. The king was recently quoted as saying that a pro-democracy movement would not constitute a threat to his government as had happened in Nepal, where King Birendra bowed to violent protests last April and restored the multi-party system after 30 years of non-party politics.

The Bhutanese government cites political reform such as the existence of a National Assembly and a National

Chinese show of unity in run-up to Asian Games

From CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

DENG Xiaoping, China's elder statesman, celebrated his 86th birthday yesterday with out pomp and circumstance. It did not appear to be a coincidence that, in a ceremony in Tiananmen Square the same day, his appointed successor, Jiang Zemin, the general secretary, lit a birthday candle with a difference: the Asian Games torch.

The mass killing on June 4 last year and recent political and economic stagnation have harmed Mr Deng's reputation. The choice of Peking to hold the Asian Games next month is seen as one of his biggest achievements, a diplomatic coup aimed at restoring Peking's tarnished image.

The Chinese leadership has

talked of little but the Asian Games, which open on September 22, and the torch-lighting ceremony was seen as the climax of months of frenzied building of sports facilities and scraping together of funds. Yesterday's ceremony was a strange spectacle, carried out with an air of religious reverence in front of a giant blow-up panda which was inelegantly deflated as soon as the event was over. Thousands of carrier pigeons were released as messengers of peace, and a military band played up-beat music. But there were few spontaneous smiles among the carefully vetted audience, who had been issued with scarves and bunches of flowers to wave mechanically as athletes carried torches from the square, and supposedly towards the four corners of China.

Veteran hardliners President Yang Shangkun and Wang Zhen, the vice-president, were not at the ceremony, suggesting that they might have been celebrating Mr Deng's birthday with him in private. Mr Deng is officially retired, sometimes vanishing for months and then reappearing to chuckle at reports that he is dead.

Most notable for his absence from yesterday's ceremony was Li Peng, the prime

minister, believed to regard Mr Jiang as an arch-rival. The two usually try to upstage each other during media appearances. Observers wondered why the Communist party leader had been chosen to light the flame when the Asian Games has little to do with the party. Why, moreover, would Mr Li choose to be absent at such a high-profile event?

In the run-up to the Asian Games the leadership is trying desperately to turn a face of stability and unity to the world, and to hide its factionalism. As during the Cultural Revolution, it is only things like leadership line-ups at yesterday's ceremony which offer clues on who is up and who is down.

If a power struggle is raging, it is unlikely to come into the open until after the Asian Games. Until then the more practical challenge of making Peking a capital worthy of facing wealthier Asian visitors is all-important. Peking's local newspapers recently encouraged residents to "bludgeon to death" pet dogs, which dirty the environment, and to stop spitting. Mr Deng himself, famous for his chair-side spittoon, may shake his head sadly at the street banners declaring "Every mouthful of spit contains millions of germs".



Deng: keeping low profile on his 86th birthday

Hard sell fails to soften up East Germans

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

WEST German advertisements are met with "bewildered amazement" and incomprehension by East Germans, who also uniformly reject as patronising any West German television commercials aimed at them, the Hamburg office of Lintas, the advertising agency, has found.

The most common response to West German advertisements for consumer goods, financial services and do-it-yourself equipment was "I simply had to go out: I couldn't take it any more."

"Those swine, they kept it all from us, we weren't supposed to see it," was the next most popular reaction of the 60-odd participants, who spent four weeks in May convincing Lintas that "brand literacy" was too much to hope for. Jürgen Stolte, conducting the study as head of strategic planning and research at Lintas Hamburg, said:

"We found a complete inability to reproduce advertising messages or name any advertised brands - even in a negative manner. Some people might know the brand names, but they don't know what brand offers what." A female participant from Dessau summed it up: "We have always watched your advertising, but what use was there in remembering any of it?"

Herr Stolte said many of the participants suffered from "undefined and undifferentiated fears" about the "brutality" of the capitalist system which "at times assumed a psychotic character." He said some of the East Germans' conclusions also seemed bizarre. "When the new money is here we'll be standing in front of the savings bank at four o'clock in the morning," a participant said.

East Germans, young and old, from small villages and big cities, tend not to understand the point of "lifestyle" advertisements. "They can't see what

a West German Gillette commercial showing men holding babies has to do with razor blades," said Herr Stolte. "They want an ad that says, 'This product is used to do this'."

The East Germans are also sensitive to advertising they know has been aimed at them, putting advertisers in a quandary. "They don't understand West German ads, which they can see on television, but they don't want special ads for themselves. They don't want the West to think they are idiots," Herr Stolte said.

As a result of its research Lintas has decided it must support television and radio advertising with printed material on what a product is for. It will also make its commercials longer but less frequent, because of unanimous complaints from East Germans about "overkill".

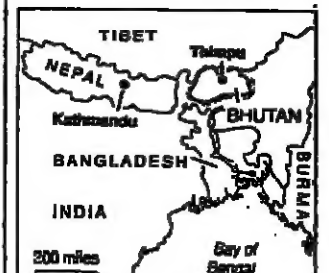
"They haven't developed the Western immune system to advertising. They listen carefully to everything," said Herr Stolte. But all of them said,

"Can't you think up anything new? I'm always hearing the same thing over and over again on the radio."

● SCHWERIN: East German police here said yesterday that they were investigating the murder of a Soviet soldier shot in the chest with a Kalashnikov sub-machinegun while on guard duty last week. The murder of Oleg Kosbar, aged 19, at Perleberg in the north of the country, appeared to be the latest in a series of shootings involving Soviet soldiers based in East Germany.

A West German radio station quoted Soviet officers in Perleberg on Tuesday as saying that two other soldiers had been shot dead in the south this month. Shots had also been fired three times at guard posts, but nobody was hit, it said.

The murder squad in Schwerin, near Perleberg, said it had been called in to investigate the Kosbar case even though the shooting was inside a Soviet military base.



Advisory Council, but critics say that the assembly is dominated by the king's nominees and has no real legislative authority.

The state-run newspaper *Kuensel*, the only legal publication in the small Himalayan kingdom, recently described pro-democracy demands as "anti-national and seditious".

Nepalese settlers, who are leading the demands for democracy, form about 45 per cent of Bhutan's population of 1.3 million. The Bhutan People's party says that it plans to achieve its goals through non-violence but warns that the government might try to suppress the movement by force.

Influential sections of the Nepalese press in Kathmandu, and other political organisations here, have suggested that the Nepalese government should support the Bhutanese struggle for democracy. But observers here believe it is unlikely that the government will do so, especially in view of its own domestic problems.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LOGIC OF WAR

For the first time since the Tet offensive in 1968, American reserves have been recalled to active military service. Technically, the United States is not yet on a war footing. It is applying diplomatic pressure backed by military enforcement of sanctions. But there can be little doubt that if defeating President Saddam Hussein should require troops, domestic and international support has rallied behind the American leadership to a degree which might not, as weeks turned to months, be sustained. The temptation is growing to seize this "window of opportunity".

Does this validate President Mitterrand's assertion on Tuesday that, from the first minute of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the world entered into "the logic of war", a progression from which it will be difficult to escape "without renouncing the fundamental objective of the defence of law"?

The "logic of war" is a powerful phrase, recalling the sense of inevitability that preceded the first world war, the role of such inflexible factors as the railway timetable in the mobilisations that made conflict impossible to avoid. In the handling of any danger as grave as that with which Iraq has presented the world, the time may come when calculations of military advantage weigh more heavily in decisions than the necessarily imprecise assessments of diplomacy, and military precautions against bloodshed become instead preparations for the shedding of blood.

The question is whether that stage has been reached. Is there yet more room for compromise, pragmatism and even the unexpected than are dreamed of in Cartesian philosophy? Should not the rest of the world be prepared still to talk to Saddam Hussein? President Mitterrand, who for all his cultivation of the Cartesian spirit and statesmanlike aloofness is as shrewd a pragmatist as has ever occupied the Elysée, is not alone in believing that the room for diplomatic compromise has vanished. Iraq is clearly obliged under international law, reinforced by UN resolutions, to withdraw unconditionally from Kuwait and release all foreign civilians.

The contention that if the world wants Kuwait to be set free it should talk to its jailer would be stronger had not Saddam proved, with his solemn promises not to invade

Kuwait hours before his forces struck, that his word is worth nothing whatever. In that sense the Americans have merely stated the obvious in rejecting Tuesday's offer of direct talks "without preconditions" by Iraq's foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, on the ground that there is nothing to talk about.

How then to effect an Iraqi surrender before Western publics weary of medieval siege, and Iraqi propaganda erodes the position of Arab leaders with their publics? Pragmatism has limits, even in the Arab world: Jordanian and Palestinian mediation (based on such ideas as incomplete withdrawal by Iraq and partial restoration of the al-Sabah family under a different head of state) cannot be treated as serious. Any such deal would reward Iraq's aggression. Pragmatism might yet ally with the unexpected, as Iraq's military commanders weigh the mounting odds against them, to attempt another coup against Saddam, but there can be no guarantee of that, or of their success. Short of Saddam's overthrow, he must either be forced back, or change his mind and withdraw voluntarily.

Today, that appears impossible, but Saddam is notoriously opportunistic. Under duress, he has changed his mind before: in 1975, when he signed the Algiers agreement with Iran, and last week, when he abruptly accepted Tehran's peace terms.

To justify aggression against fellow-Arabs in the name of pan-Arab leadership was an enormous political gamble. Most Arab leaders have ranged themselves against Iraq. Now even the Palestine Liberation Organisation, scenting failure, is distancing itself from Baghdad, and President Gadhafi has reversed his position to condemn the invasion of Kuwait and the holding of civilian hostages, even saying that Libya would, if asked, join a United Nations naval blockade.

Saddam must, therefore, be tempted to raise the stakes (possibly by destabilising Jordan with the aim of drawing in Israel) or to try to pluck some rhetorical victory out of the jaws of failure. There are signs that Baghdad has begun to look for ways to do the latter. Because Saddam understands the "logic of war", the world's best prospect of escaping its most hideous consequences is to press forward coolly with preparations for Saddam's defeat.

JAPANESE JITTERS

The Tokyo stock market, already feeling distinctly fragile, yesterday had its ninth largest fall ever. Japanese shares have lost over 35 per cent of their value since the start of the year, nearly half of that since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Analysts say there is worse to come. If so, the effects may spread beyond Japan to the rest of the world.

Tokyo has suffered more from the Gulf crisis than any other major stock market, mainly because Japan is more dependent on imported oil from the Middle East. But underlying the jitters in Japan is a deeper worry about the soundness of the country's banks. This is a worry that the international financial community should share.

Eight out of the ten largest banks in the world are Japanese. They have become the world's biggest lenders. America relies partly on Japan to finance its budget deficit: 10 per cent of bidders for US Treasury bonds at the most recent auction were Japanese. And in the past few years, Japanese banks have moved into domestic corporate lending, both in Britain and America, often offering lower rates of interest than the competition in order to carve out a market share.

But because of falls in the Tokyo stock market, the big Japanese banks are starting to look just a little less credit-worthy than once they were. All banks have to show they have a certain proportion of money backing their lending. The problem arises over what is allowed to count as "money". Under new international rules, banks are now allowed to count up to 45 per cent of their unrealised profits on shares as part of their capital ratio. This has been a boon to the Japanese in particular; they are large investors in the stock market and often own big crossholdings in other companies.

As the stock market falls, however, their capital base erodes. Already one of the big

American credit-rating agencies has downgraded the status of two Japanese banks. That means they are considered somewhat less likely to be able to pay their debts. More important to the rest of the world is that the smaller the banks' capital base becomes, the less money they will be able to lend.

The effects of this belt-tightening are already starting to be felt. Eurotunnel has been trying to persuade its Japanese bankers to come up with their share of the latest £2 billion refinancing, so far with little success. If the Japanese fail to deliver, the refinancing is almost certainly doomed.

If Japanese banks contract their lending, it will mainly be at the expense of overseas business. International lending tends to be less profitable, because it is more competitive, than lending at home. Besides, as the dollar falls, and Japanese interest rates rise, lending in yen looks more attractive than lending in dollars. Japanese interest rates have already risen by 1½ percentage points since the beginning of the year, and the bond markets believe they are set to rise again.

An interest rate increase will only exacerbate the problems the banks already face. It will dent the morale of the stock market still further, and put pressure on property speculators, to whom the banks have lent heavily. The banks will find themselves drawing back from new overseas entanglements. As the supply of lending from Japan diminishes, interest rates in other countries will rise.

Worst affected by this trend will probably be America. Cassandras have predicted a flight of capital out of New York and back to Tokyo for several years. So far, it has not materialised. But pressures on Japanese investors are growing. If anything can concentrate the mind of the Washington legislators on reducing the American budget deficit, it should be the falls on the Tokyo stock market.

A WRINKLE OR TWO

Sir Crispin Tickell, Britain's permanent representative at the United Nations, is due to retire on his 60th birthday on Saturday. He has a bright future ahead of him no doubt, but should things go wrong, he might like to know that the DIY supermarket chain B&Q has vacancies for the over-fifties in Cardiff.

Sir Crispin has manfully applied appropriate British scorn to the misbehaviour of Iraq in the UN Security Council in recent days, but his first and gentler love is the environment, to which cause he is credited with having converted the prime minister. However, the consequences for the environment of any conflict in the Gulf is not the British Government's primary concern, so the greater wheeler-dealer skills of Sir David Hannay, Sir Crispin's designated successor and currently Britain's man in Brussels, may be more useful as the Gulf crunch approaches.

Like Sir Crispin, Sir David too will be expected to retire at 60, a use-by date to which the Foreign Office likes as few exceptions as possible. One such was Sir Antony Acland, UK ambassador in Washington, who was temporarily exempted from the rule on his 60th birthday earlier this year because of his "special relationship" with the Bush administration. Such exceptions should be more common.

Retirement at 60 applies to all civil servants. The fact that many may be at or hardly past their prime explains why strict and complicated rules have had to be introduced to control their future careers in industry or business. This is something of a contrast to the way modern society usually regards its more mature members. On the one hand they are

highly sought after to leaven a board of directors with their wisdom and experience. On the other hand commerce and industry still seems stuck with the nonsense of "too old at 50". Many a personnel manager — themselves perhaps in their 50s — would have to plead guilty to discrimination against others of their own age. It is time they saw it makes no sense. Congratulations, therefore, to B&Q for breaking the mould; and may their profit margins ever grow.

The company opened a store in Macclesfield last year staffed entirely by "mature workers". It said yesterday they have proved better at communicating with customers, their absenteeism is lower, their health good, their contribution to turnover exceptional. They understand DIY too. Above all, of course, they understand people. The bias against the older employee in other companies suggests a worrying discounting of such skills in British marketing. To sell a gadget to Mr Jones, to plagiarise an educational aphorism, requires not just understanding the gadget but also understanding Mr Jones. To be the same age as Mr Jones is a head start.

The economic statistics indicate that it is the over-50s who are beginning to inherit the earth. They have the surplus cash, the spending power and the wisdom to use it discerningly. The squeeze of the demographic time-bomb — the declining number of young people coming on to the job market — will only gradually force employers to re-examine their "ageist" prejudices — unless, that is, the age group that is the object of such prejudice realises it has the economic power to force the pace, by choosing where it shops.

Keeping up world pressure on Iraq

From Mr M. J. Dixon

Sir, Despite the criticism in your newspaper and elsewhere of the US decision to "enforce" an economic blockade against Iraq, it may well be lawful under international law. The error of the criticism is to see the US action as enforcement of the United Nations sanctions, although this is what some members of the Bush Administration unwisely called it.

While it is quite true that the United States has no power to enforce UN sanctions without specific Security Council authorisation, Resolution 661 itself expressly states that nothing therein shall restrict the right of collective self-defence. In this case, therefore, the crucial question is whether the blockade can be said to be an act of collective self-defence of Kuwait undertaken at the request of its legitimate government.

I would have thought it at least arguable that it is and that the "interdiction" is lawful, irrespective of any action the UN has taken or may take to enforce its own blockade. The US-led blockade may well enforce UN sanctions indirectly, but it has its own justification.

Yours etc,
MARTIN DIXON,
Robinson College, Cambridge.
August 20.

From Mr Robert Adley, MP for

Christchurch (Conservative)
Sir, General Farrar-Hockley ("How Saddam's army can be beaten", August 20) contemplates the reactions to an Iraqi attack on Israel via Jordan: "Syria and Egypt would soon be obliged to join such a venture". In the same edition you report that "Israeli troops shot dead a Jordanian soldier 17 miles from Jericho on the West Bank".

John Huston recalled

From Sir John Woolf

Sir, In defence of John Huston's posthumous reputation I must refute some of the defamatory statements made in the interview with Clint Eastwood which you published in Saturday Review (August 18).

My company, Romulus Films, was the co-producer of *The African Queen* with Sam Spiegel's Horizon Pictures and my company was responsible for the entire production cost other than the salaries of Huston, Humphrey Bogart and Katharine Hepburn, which were the responsibility of Horizon Pictures.

Far from costing \$4 million, the certified cost of production, apart from Horizon's contribution of \$600,000, was in fact £248,000. This compared with a budget of £213,000. Had Huston been so obsessed with elephant hunting that he had allowed it to delay the start of production, as Clint Eastwood's rather dull film takes two hours to depict, the budget would clearly have been considerably exceeded.

Far from mortgaging his London house, as your interview alleges, Sam Spiegel had never owned a house in London. The stars' and the director's living expenses at Claridges were included in the budget for which my company was responsible.

After the great success of *The African Queen*, which has made it a classic, I produced two further films with Huston which I must certainly never have embarked upon had he been the tiresome and irresponsible egomaniac your interview and Eastwood's film make him out to be. The Eastwood interpretation, apart from voice and mannerisms, is a complete misrepresentation of Huston's character as I found it to be. He was a truly great man.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN WOOLF (Chairman),
Romulus Films Ltd.,
214 The Chambers,
Chelsea Harbour, SW10.
August 20.

Poverty figures

From the Director of the Child Poverty Action Group

Sir, I am afraid that Dr David Green of the Institute for Economic Affairs ("Poverty figures 'doctored'", report, August 20) has got his facts about the Child Poverty Action Group wrong.

As the former Secretary of State for Social Security, John Moore, has acknowledged, CPAG "are always scrupulous in defining their terms" (letter to CPAG, May 25, 1989). We have not defined "one-third of the country as poor". We do not include "those above the benefit level as poor". We have for many years defined those on supplementary benefit and below as poor — as it appears

Expertise at the top

From Mr J. B. H. Byfield

Sir, Rear-Admiral Bell's letter (August 13) raised the expected wry smile from this (long-retired) serviceman. For the "abatement rules" implemented by the Treasury and the Department of Social Security are far-reaching, even if a common thread of opportunism and parsimony can be discerned throughout.

My particular example concerns the rules (K6705/DB) affecting those unemployed persons over the age of 55 who derive (possibly all) their income from an occupational pension regarded by the DSS as "deferred earnings". The fact that employees have, as Admiral Bell writes, earned their pensions and, during the preceding years, forgone the financial advantage of the money invested

Unanswered questions on exams

From Mr Eric Dehn

Sir, As examination results emerge, statistics will be bandied about proving whatever the statisticians wish them to prove. As a retired examiner I can reveal — without, I hope, seeming to indulge in the popular pastime of "leaking", or in any way prejudicing the nation's security — certain insider dealings and past machinations by examination boards.

There was the board that always failed 20 per cent of candidates on the grounds that, if papers turned out to be too difficult or too easy, standards could thus be consistently maintained (when the practice became known schools entered a multitude of morons to fill the 20 per cent). Other boards stuck to an absolute pass standard of, say, 50 per cent. (This wasn't immutable: "Hey," said the chief examiner to me, "you've failed everyone in such and such a school. They are new customers and this will be excessively discouraging.")

Another board asked examiners to mark a hundred papers and then indicate what they considered the pass mark should be for that particular year. The suggested target figures were averaged out and grades adjusted accordingly.

Today continuous and internal assessments play a more dominant role and thus invalidate comparisons with the past.

Yours sincerely,
ERIC DEHN,
5 Trelawney Road,
Bristol, Avon.
August 16.

From the Chief Executive of the

Polytechnics Central Admissions System
Sir, I can sit back no longer and watch private entrepreneurs rip off school leavers and their parents by trading on their anxieties about higher education entrance, following the publication of A-level results.

A mythology is now being created that to get into polytechnic, university or college is so complicated that if worried applicants do not buy books or pay for consultations or attend travelling road-shows, they will be sunk without trace in the "scramble" for places. The concept of creating a market and then selling services or products to fit it is well understood, but to do so when young people and their families are at their most vulnerable is reprehensible.

I know of private advisers who follow their own vested interests by, for example, setting out to

persuade disappointed A-level students to re-sit in "examiners" in which they have an interest, rather than attempting to guide them through a series of alternative courses of action.

The only safe method of taking advice at this time is to consult either the school or college where the A levels were recently taken or the local authority careers service, which is staffed by highly-trained and experienced advisers whose only interest is the future of the school-leaver.

The public is free to choose the sources of advice and whether, or how much, it wishes to pay for them. I have no doubt, however, that teachers, career advisers, higher education institutions and the clearing houses would all put their faith behind the officially recognised sources of advice and would deprecate the privateers' approach as unethical. I sincerely hope that the media throttle back on the credence which they increasingly appear to be giving them.

Yours faithfully,
M. A. HIGGINS, Chief Executive,
Polytechnics Central Admissions System,
Filton House,
Jesseport Avenue,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.
August 16.

From Mrs M. Munro-Hill

Sir, In *Le Figaro* of July 17 some interesting figures were quoted for the period 1901 to the present day, showing the percentage of students from each year group successful in the Baccalauréat.

In 1900 the percentage stands at 44: in 1901 the pass rate was 1 per cent, in 1960 it was 11.2 per cent and by 1985 it had grown to 28 per cent. The target for the year 2000 is 80 per cent. One cannot help thinking that if 80 per cent of French students are to gain a pass in the Baccalauréat, the equivalent of our A levels, there will be very little value attached to the examination.

Since the declared intent of our GCSE examination boards for candidates aged 16-plus is very similar to that of the French educational authorities for their 18-plus age-group, one may wonder how long it will be before 80 per cent of British students at 18-plus, having known little or no failure at GCSE, succeed at advanced-level examinations.

Yours faithfully,
M. MUNRO-HILL,
2 South Glee,
Lockington,
Driffield, Yorkshire.
August 17.

From the Deputy Director General

of the Institute of Directors
Sir, Mr Colin V. Cripps, who suggested (August 4) that the Institute of Directors pronounce on the wearing of jackets for business, may like to know that it is a rule of the Institute that jackets (and ties) must be worn at all times at Pall Mall. During exceptionally high temperatures the rule is relaxed — as during the very hot spell recently.

Since some may well wish to pursue this debate, it is worth mentioning that there are still perfectly good tailors in existence who provide lightweight clothes for such temperatures. We should also remind ourselves that a jacket (meaning cover) was presumably intended to cover the body, particularly those parts which become less attractive in hot weather; an argument for keeping them on, perhaps?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN NICHOLAS,
Deputy Director General,
Institute of Directors,
116 Pall Mall, SW1.
August 13.

From Sir Ian T. Millar

Sir, There is a solution to the problem of the businessman who has to cope with heat, convention, and the need for enough pockets to accommodate wallet, credit cards and cheque-book (separately stored for security), business diary, pen, key ring, spectacles and, in my case, pocket comb and folding scissors as well.

The answer is to wear a sleeveless fisherman's jacket, which is light and cool with nine pockets or so of assorted size. I am not a fisherman myself, and I find the long pocket at the back meant for a fish will hold a folded copy of *The Times*.

Yours sincerely,
I. T. MILLAR,
94 Norfolk Avenue,
South Croydon,
Surrey.

Bunnies at law

From Mr A. D. Parr

Sir, Messrs Preston and Lewis Jones (August 14 and 22) appear to be treading on dangerous ground in their appraisal of the activities of Peter Rabbit.

One must bear in mind that the evidence against Peter is purely circumstantial and almost entirely based upon the scurrilous accusations of one Beatrix Potter. Ms Potter's writings have made similar accusations on more than one occasion (e.g., one Squirrel Nutkin and various mice with urban deprivation problems).

I suggest that it may pay Peter Rabbit to consult lawyers. A claim for damages for libel should put an end to these unsubstantiated rumours.

Yours faithfully,
A. D. PARR,
27 Greenvale,
Northfield,
Birmingham.
August 22.

Condom safety

From Professor Michael Marland

Sir, The vocabulary of "national condom week" (report, August 14) reveals a semantic problem which exacerbates HIV/Aids education. The Director General of the British Safety Council very reasonably recommends that women should "make sure their partner always used a condom during intercourse, irrespective of any other method of contraception being used".

The word contraception means "against conception". What a pity that the term that could have been the common one (and is indeed more common in some parts of Europe) has not become the usual one in the UK: "prophylactic" (from "pro", meaning in advance, and the Greek *phylax*, a guardian).

In the last century the condom was recommended as much as a protection against disease as prevention of conception. Could it be that the almost universal use of the term "contraception" makes it harder to remember that the device also prevents the spread of sexually transmitted diseases?

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL MARLAND
(Headteacher),
North Westminster Community School,
Marylebone Lower House,
Penfold Street, NW1.
August 14.

Study in Greene

From Mr Graham Greene

OM, CH
Sir, Mr Jacobson has not studied enough. In his report from Sierra Leone ("Influx for African study in Greene", August 18) he writes that during my wartime Intelligence Service I stayed in the City Hotel in Freetown. I didn't spend a single night there during those years. The character in my novel was called Scobie not Stobie, and he was a Commissioner of Police not "a cynical customs officer". Better study better, Mr Jacobson.

Yours etc,
GRAHAM GREENE,
06600 Antibes, France.
August 20.

Dr Green himself does

Those up to 40 per cent above this benefit level we have defined as "on the margins of poverty".

We have said that those on supplementary benefit fall further behind the rest of the population if their benefit does not rise in line with average incomes. (The latest figures show that the bottom 10 per cent saw their incomes rise by a meagre 0.1 per cent after housing costs between 1979 and 1987, compared with over 23 per cent for society as a whole).

Yours sincerely,
FRAN BENNETT, Director,
Child Poverty Action Group,
4th Floor,
1-5 Bath Street, EC1.
August 20.

former is extinguished

at a pension only slightly higher than the married person's state pension (when OAP benefits and concessions are taken into account).

The final stigma is associated with the DSS interpretation that receipt of a substantial (above £4,737) pension by an unemployed person implies "grounds for doubting his genuine availability for work". In spite of local DSS offices being required to satisfy themselves on this last condition in the case of each applicant, long letters to both my MP and the DSS have resulted in the same lack of elucidation as experienced by Admiral Bell.

Yours faithfully,
J. B. H. BYFIELD,
Broad Ham, Burrough Street,
Ash, Martock, Somerset.
August 13.

Letters to the Editor

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Atomic tusk test could end illegal ivory trade

Decades of relentless ivory poaching have put the African elephant high on the endangered species list. But the war against the poacher may eventually be fought with a new type of weapon, an ivory "fingerprinting" technique, that pinpoints exactly where in Africa the tusks came from, giving the national park rangers a positive lead in tracking down the culprits.

Researchers in South Africa have discovered that the ratios of certain atomic isotopes in elephant bones and tusks provide a distinctive chemical "signature" of the animal's home environment.

Using techniques to "read" the isotope signatures of suspect pieces of ivory, conservationists may, in the future, be able to deduce where the elephants were killed. That knowledge, to the chagrin of the ivory trader, could allow them to distinguish between ivory poached from game reserves and materials obtained from legal culling elsewhere.

The tell-tale signatures are the result of a kind of environmental "imprinting". For several years it has been known that the isotope composition of animal bone and flesh is partly fixed by diet, which in turn is influenced by habitat.

The bones of elephants that feed mainly on grass, for instance, have a different ratio of carbon isotopes from those of their shrub-eating cousins. If shrubs are scarce in a particular region, the elephants born and bred there will produce

A form of scientific bone 'fingerprinting' could help track down the ivory poachers and save the African elephant from the threat of extinction, David Concar reports

ivory with a distinctive "grassy" isotope signature.

Similarly, an elephant's endowment of the rare atomic isotope nitrogen-15 depends on its availability from local vegetation. The more arid an environment is, the more nitrogen-15 its vegetation holds, and so the more richly endowed in the isotope an elephant's tusks become.

Likewise, levels of strontium and lead isotopes in tusks are fixed by those in the local vegetation, which in turn come from the local soil and water.

In today's *Nature* magazine, the researchers, who worked in two rival teams, describe how measurements of carbon, nitrogen, and strontium isotopes in combination allow the bones and tusks of different populations of southern African elephants to be distinguished.

To prove their point, they took bone and ivory specimens from elephants in game reserves all over southern Africa, including the Addo Elephant National Park, the Kruger National Park, and the Etosha Game Reserve, and showed that the isotope signature of any one reserve is significantly

different from those of neighbouring reserves.

The original aim of the research was to discover what elephants eat so that game reserves could be better managed, says Dr Tim Heaton, of the British Geological Survey, who worked with Dr John Vogel and his isotope research team in Pretoria in the Transvaal for ten years. "We also measured isotopes in bones from prehistoric human populations to see if we could distinguish between a sea and terrestrial diet," he adds.

In the past ten years, the total number of African elephants has plunged from about 1.3 million to an estimated 600,000 almost exclusively because of ivory poaching.

In the southern African countries of Botswana, Malawi and Zimbabwe, effective action was taken to stabilise local elephant populations at an earlier stage, but elsewhere pressure from poaching grew overwhelming.

As a result, all trade in ivory was effectively banned last year through the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the international wildlife convention that protects

species threatened with extinction.

Although Britain opted out for the first six months of this year in order to clear huge ivory stocks in Hong Kong, it is now committed to abiding by the ban until at least 1992.

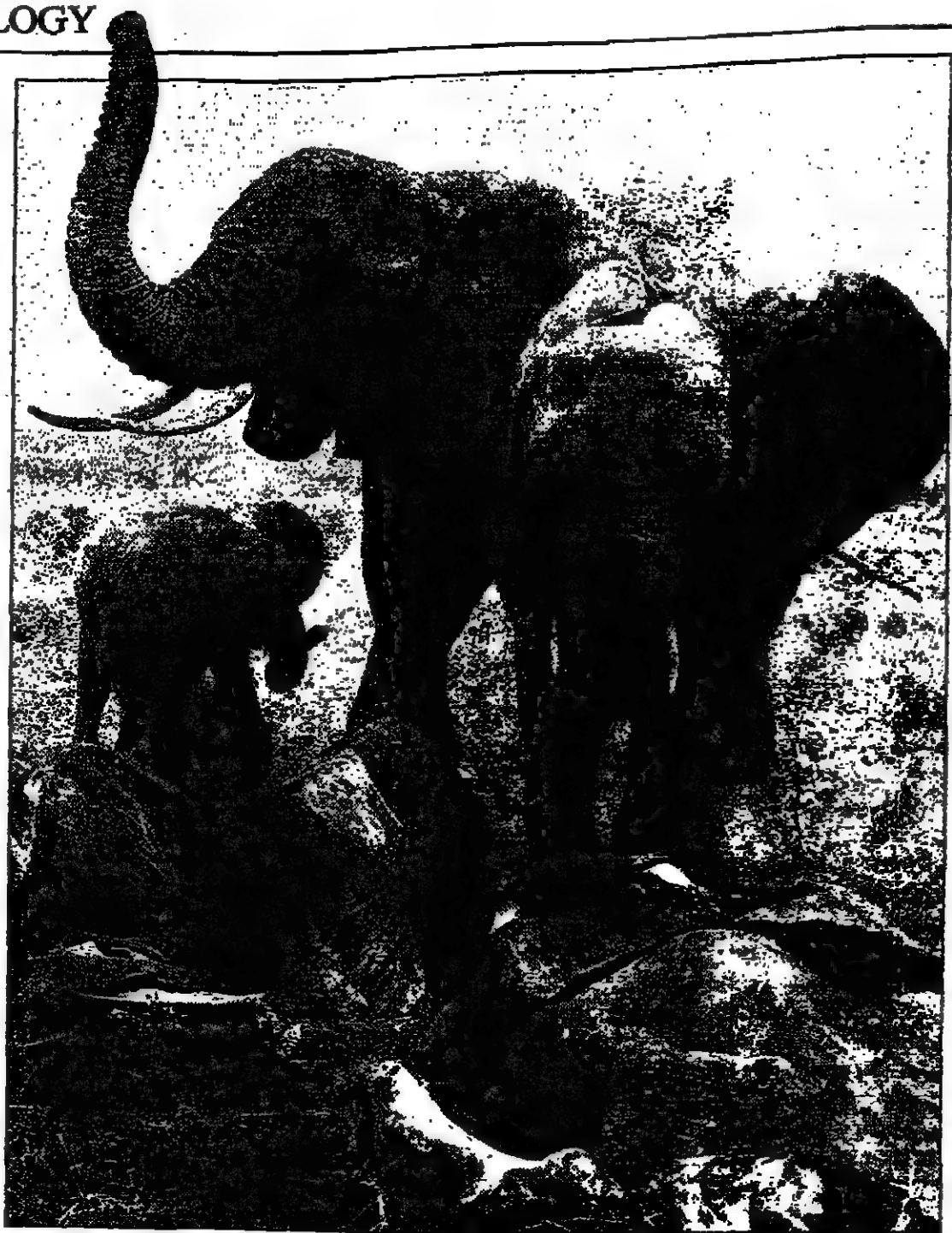
But Simon Lyster, of the World Wide Fund for Nature, says: "All the economists said that if you ban the trade in ivory, you'll drive the trade underground, its scarcity value will increase, the price will increase and poaching will increase. In fact the opposite has happened."

He maintains that with legal trading having almost stopped, the need for a new method of identifying poached ivory is not as great as it once was. However, Dr Julia Lee-Thorp, a member of Professor van der Merwe's isotope research group at Cape Town University, doubts whether the total ban will last.

Five southern African countries, including Botswana and Zimbabwe, have opted out and at any time could decide to sell ivory from legally culled elephants. "Our method will be useful in making sure that only culled ivory reaches the market and trade routes and not poached ivory," Dr Lee-Thorp says.

Her main fear is that the market in Japan, where ivory is a culturally established commodity rather than a luxury, will prove impossible to eradicate.

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Face to face with death: a family of elephants find an elephant slaughtered by poachers for its tusks



Searching for fatal disorders: Professor Pepys with his scanner

A test that can diagnose a range of potentially fatal disorders with more accuracy, speed and safety than existing methods has been developed by British scientists.

Some conditions which are usually recognised only when they have reached an advanced or inoperable stage will now be detectable much sooner by the technique. It could also lead, within the next few years, to the first forms of effective treatment against them.

The test is for systemic amyloidosis, a rare and usually fatal syndrome in which deposits of protein called amyloid spread silently through the body and cause progressive damage to vital organs such as the heart, kidneys, liver and spleen.

Amyloid also gathers in the

brain, bone marrow and joints, and is part of the body's ageing process. There is no effective treatment which dissolves the deposits of amyloid, although their progression can be delayed in some cases.

More often than not, amyloidosis is undiagnosed and discovered only by chance at post-mortem examinations. Current diagnosis depends on biopsy, the removal of samples of tissue or cells for microscopic examination, but this can be hazardous to many patients.

The new method has been developed by researchers at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School at Hammersmith Hospital,

British team develop early warning for hidden serious disease

west London, and is described in detail in today's issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The scientists, led by Professor Mark Pepys, are cautious about some potential applications of the test, but believe it will become widely used.

One of the most exciting possibilities is that within the next few years the test could be adapted as a specific targeting agent which could be coupled to agents capable

of degrading or dissolving the deposits.

Another tantalising prospect is that the technique could be used in the diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease, the most common type of senile dementia. This crippling and untreatable disorder is characterised in more than 90 per cent of cases by amyloid plaques and deposits in the brain and cerebrovascular system.

At present, Alzheimer's disease can be diagnosed only by the process of excluding other possible causes. "It is much too soon to predict a diagnostic test for Alzheimer's, let alone a treatment, but medicine has always progressed from diagnosis to treat-

ment, and that is where our hopes would lie," Professor Pepys said yesterday.

The technique involves the use of a purified human plasma protein called serum amyloid P component, or SAP, combined with a radioactive ingredient to allow it to be traced in the body by sophisticated scanning equipment. When it is injected into the patient, it rapidly locates amyloid deposits wherever they are in the body, and provides detailed images of them via the scanner.

"This method allows us to discover hidden conditions in a non-invasive, relatively simple way. It provides clinically important information which is not otherwise available," Professor Pepys said.

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HEALTH

MEDICAL BRIEFING Dr Thomas Stuttford

THE 16th century writer William Bullein defined the still current popular view when he wrote in *The Bulwarke Against All Sicknesses* that "a good kitchen is a good apothecary's shop". Jonathan Swift, 100 years later, endorsed Bullein's opinion when he said: "Kitchen physic is the best physic."

Hospital regimes no longer reflect this approach, for, in the past 30 years, ward mealtimes have ceased to be the high points in the patient's day. Until then, they were considered an important, sometimes the most important, factor in an invalid's recovery, but their status has slipped; they are rarely discussed on ward rounds, and recovery today is tending to rely more on complex medical procedures, coupled with the power of modern drugs, than the ability of a nurse to charm an aged or frail patient to finish the soup in the feeding cup. Sometimes it seems

Crusts of no comfort

to the bystander, as he watches inexperienced relatives trying to persuade a desperately ill or dejected patient to eat and drink, that the occasional life might be preserved if there was time available for ward staff to concentrate on an individual's nourishment.

To those brought up in the era of calves-foot jelly, Benger's, and the teaching of Halliburton on the value of hot, tempting, meals, the opinions expressed by the National Association of Health Authorities (NAHA) this week seem almost moribund.

These opinions supported the Coventry Health District, which has announced that as an economy it, like many other authorities, will in future provide National Health Service patients with only one hot main meal a day, sandwiches and fruit will be available for dinner in the evening. Reasoned opinions have been advanced to support this decision. The association claims that it is easier to serve cold food which is healthy and fresh, by which it means the meals are less likely to be contaminated by salmonella than reheated hot food. Hospital meals are often cooked at a central point and then distributed to smaller hospitals around the area for reheating. The association makes a fundamental error; it is confusing the appetite and needs of patients who are ravaged by disease with those of the rest of the population. A farm worker sweating out in the harvest field can work up an enthusiasm for the dull, cold sandwich. Likewise, the hungry traveller may relish British Rail sandwiches. But the loss of appetite which is a symptom common to most physical and mental disease is unlikely to be overcome by an institutional sandwich. The health authorities, as they trim the costs of looking after patients, may claim sandwiches have as many calories, vitamins, minerals and as much protein as a reheated hot meal, and rather less salmonella, but this will be of little consolation to patients too weary and wasted by their disease to chew a rubbery crust.



A pain never to be ignored

THE magazine *General Practitioner* reports that a 13-year-old boy who lost a testicle through gangrene has been awarded £9,000 damages against his general practitioner, who failed to diagnose the cause of the trouble, torsion of the testis, despite the classic symptoms of sudden testicular pain and vomiting.

Acute testicular pain is a symptom which always needs immediate investigation, but in this case the boy was initially advised, over the telephone, to take an aspirin, apply a hot water bottle to the afflicted area and, to all intents and purposes, wait to see what nature could achieve in the way of a cure. Later the GP visited him, diagnosed an acute infection (epidymo-orchitis) and only five days later — by which time the testicle was gangrenous — called for a specialist's opinion.

Torsion of the testis is a surgical emergency. Like other testicular diseases it is, due to some undiscovered quirk of modern life, becoming increasingly common. The affected testicle, which fails to descend in early life in the accustomed way, is thereafter poorly anchored and twists within the scrotum. The twisting cuts off the blood supply where it flows down the spermatic cord and, in consequence, the organ, starved of nourishment, becomes gangrenous within six hours.

Torsion of the testis can occur at any age, even in babies, but is most common in teenagers and in early adult life; it usually

follows violent activities, particularly those such as changing a wheel or heaving paving stones, and it can also occur during sexual intercourse. The testis has to be untwisted and fixed. At the same time the other one is anchored, because whatever the abnormality which produced the trouble on one side is also likely to cause similar problems later on the other. As happened in the case

Putting the bite on tooth decay

ROTTEN teeth in the 16th and 17th centuries were a sign of affluence, for only the nobles could afford the sweetmeats, which cause decay. The working man's teeth may have been ground down by coarse, contaminated cereals, but they were healthy. Archaeologists, working on the Mary Rose, noted how much better the ratings' teeth were than those of the officers. In the 19th century and the first three-quarters of this century, class bias was reversed; the upper classes had better cared-for teeth, while all too often the urchin's grin was disfigured by blackened stumps.

Today the social background matters much less. The most important factors in preventing dental decay are no longer a careful diet, a trip to the dentist each prep school holiday, or even dental hygiene. Using fluoride toothpaste, taking fluoride supplements and, above all, living in an area where the local authority adds fluoride to the water are now the factors that matter

most. In Birmingham, where fluoride has been added to the water at one part per million, dental decay is half that in other boroughs, often in middle-class areas, which have refused to add fluoride.

Doctors, dentists, parents and the children of the post-fluoride age now growing into young adults all welcome increasingly healthy British mouths. For example, since 1983 the number of children in the Bath area at the age of five with no decay has increased from 45 to 65 per cent. Mr A.V.F. Pitter, writing in *Dental Practice*, has drawn attention to one problem caused by the lack of decay: dentists are no longer able to identify a badly decomposed or burnt body by recognising the victim's teeth. Modern teeth no longer carry his hallmark. As dentists have more time, their interest in orthodontics has grown, but Mr Pitter maintains that few have up-to-date models, photographs or X-rays of the completed work on the patient, and makes a plea that the decay-free younger generations should wear a durable identification disc.

Survival can be simply a matter of accident

Did Roman Britons have a better chance

of life-saving

treatment than

patients in

the NHS?

Liz Gill reports

Britain had more trauma centres under Roman occupation than it has now. They were called valentinaria and archaeologists have found the remains of 11 of them in regions, says Professor Donald Trunkey, a professor of surgery at Oregon Health Sciences University, in the United States, and an authority on the treatment of the severely injured. "They were designed to give the best possible care to legionaries who had been hurt in battle."

"It seems ironic that what you have today is essentially a non-system. I would have thought that would be unacceptable."

The outcome for the accident victim in this country in terms of both survival and full recovery often appears to be largely a matter of luck. Crash your car in East Anglia, for instance, and you could be attended at the roadside by a specially trained GP; fall from scaffolding within a 50 mile radius of Biggin Hill airfield, Bromley, and you could be reached by the Royal London Hospital's helicopter; suffer an industrial accident in Stoke-on-Trent and a "flying squad" could be dispatched from the city's Royal Infirmary.

In other areas, however, your chances of survival might be much slimmer and it was to remove this element of chance that the Royal College of Surgeons called two years ago for the establishment of 24 trauma centres around the United Kingdom.

In a study of 1,000 accidental deaths in which half the patients had been alive on arrival at hospital, the college's working party concluded that a third could have survived, given the right treatment at the right time. Of 170 preventable deaths, 86 had been wrongly diagnosed and in many cases surgery had been delayed, incomplete, or not given at all.

The report estimated that nationally almost 5,000 lives could be saved every year. According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, 15,000 people die in accidents annually, including 5,000 on the roads, of whom more than 400 are children. Five years ago the Medical Commission on Accident Prevention estimated that traffic accidents alone cost the country £2.8 billion a year.

"Injury is the commonest cause of death in the under-thirties," says Professor Miles Irving, the professor of surgery at Manchester University and chairman of the working party from the royal college. "A tenth of health care costs in the European Community is devoted to dealing with injury."

"The problem is that, for the average hospital, cases of very seriously injured patients are comparatively rare and therefore you cannot have experienced surgeons and anaesthetists waiting around for something that may happen once or twice a week. So they get on with other work and the patient may be seen by a junior doctor. What a trauma centre would provide is the immediate availability of consultant opinion 24 hours a day, every day."

The report says that, for a hospital to cater for trauma effectively, it must have a number of specialities available on site, not just in the key areas of neurosurgery, cardiothoracic surgery and orthopaedics, but also in plastic, vascular and maxillofacial surgery.

The number of hospitals which can offer all these together, plus the necessary accident and emergency and intensive care departments, may be only a handful. In the south, for example, there are four: one in Southampton and three in London: the Royal Free, Bart's and the Royal London.

Ideally, no one should be more than 20 minutes from a centre but distance is not as crucial as time, particularly during what is known as the "golden hour", the period immediately after an accident when many patients die from blood loss or blocked airways.

A paramedical team trained in resuscitation techniques, able to staunch bleeding and insert a breathing tube could afford to bypass the nearest hospital in order to get the expert help at the trauma unit. "At the moment," Professor Irving says, "all we have is a scoop and run policy."

The quality of treatment during the immediate post-injury phase may also affect a patient's chance during another danger period which may come two or three weeks later. Vulnerability to infection can be influenced by blood loss early on.

Severe injury is sometimes difficult to spot. Professor Brian Rowlands, a consultant surgeon at



The Roman way: archaeologists have found the remains of 11 trauma centres in Britain

the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast, and chairman of an international trauma conference last year, says: "Someone with a blunt injury from a car crash may languish in an emergency department before it is realised he is in a desperate condition with a ruptured liver. I always preach anticipation rather than reaction." The trouble now, he says, is that treatment can depend on where an accident occurs and "it is that business of luck that we need to eliminate."

Professor Rowlands describes injury deaths as the "last great plague of the young". Professor Trunkey believes this is why it is still low on the list of priorities. "Politicians and those who determine what is spent are much more concerned with cancer and heart disease because those are the things that affect them. Yet if you cured all cancer you would only affect average longevity by two years because it is a disease primarily of the old. The average age for the motor vehicle accident victim is 27."

"These systems are expensive to set up, but they are extremely cost effective. It has been calculated in the United States that if you can return a 20-year-old man to work he will repay your investment 3,000 per cent in terms of what he puts back into the economy compared with what has been spent on him."

American trauma centres claim to have cut death rates by 30 per cent and to return 85 per cent of patients to full productivity within a year. West Germany, which has had a trauma system for 20 years, has seen its annual death toll fall from 16,000 to 8,000.

The Royal London Hospital's emergency helicopter has been operating for more than a year and dealt with almost 300 patients in accidents ranging from motorway pile-ups to falls on building sites. So far, says Dr Mark Dalton, a registrar, 10 lives have been saved. The service is paid for partly by private enterprise and partly by the NHS, which is completing a helipad at the hospital, along with two more operating theatres and a four-bed unit. The aircraft can fly across London in ten minutes and can land at the scenes of most accidents and in the grounds of 60 hospitals in the surrounding area. "We believe this is the way forward," Dr Dalton says.

There has been some movement, however. The health department is funding the first designated trauma centre in the

United Kingdom at Stoke's Royal Infirmary in a pilot scheme to run two or three years.

Not all experts are in favour of trauma centres. Major-General Norman Kirby, the accident and emergency consultant at Guy's Hospital and the president of the British Association for Accident and Emergency Medicine, believes patients may be better served by improving the existing services particularly the staffing

levels in many existing accident departments. "Our trauma service is very poor compared with parts of the Continent and we badly need to pull together various elements," he says. He prefers the idea of trauma experts backing up existing departments and points out that Australia has found its special centres to be expensive white elephants.

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Trouble in the family way

THE decision about when to stop trying to conceive is one of the toughest a childless couple will have to make. Infertility investigations are expensive, embarrassing and time-consuming. Now, with the announcement that Bourn Hall clinic is prepared to co-operate with surrogacy arrangements, another stony path has appeared for the couple to tread.

Bourn Hall is not the first clinic to implant a frozen embryo into a host mother, but it is the first to discuss the issue openly. This new frankness follows a gradual change of heart by the British Medical Association (BMA). Its annual meeting in June gave qualified approval to doctors who were willing to become involved in surrogacy, while stressing such arrangements should be considered only when all other treatments had failed.

Surrogacy appears to offer a solution for thousands of women who are able to ovulate, but are unable to carry and deliver a healthy child. Unlike adoption, surrogacy allows couples to have children who are genetically their own. The embryo is produced in the laboratory after the husband's sperm has fertilised the wife's egg. It is then frozen until it can be implanted into the womb of the surrogate.

But the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill, due to become law this autumn, makes it clear that any surrogacy arrangements will be unenforceable. If a surrogate refuses to hand over a child, the biological parents have no redress. A new clause in the same bill will forbid payment to surrogates, while the BMA has advised against arrangements where the surrogate and genetic parents are known to each other.

The law regards the woman who bears a child as the mother and her partner as the father and their names appear on the birth certificate. This still applies when the birth is the result of a frozen embryo transfer and the baby is genetically unrelated to either the surrogate or partner. Genetic parents must deposit their child in order to become legal parents. Adoption regulations outlaw pay-

A fertility clinic is offering to help with surrogacy, for a fee.

Is this progress?



Sir Malcolm: for anonymity

ments. However, according to Sir Malcolm Macnaughton, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at Glasgow university, surrogates often are paid, even if the payment is described as expenses. "We've been told the going rate is about £6,000," he says.

Sir Malcolm, the chairman of the committee which produced the BMA's surrogacy report, and a member of the Interim Licensing Authority which regulates the activities of infertility clinics, is not opposed to payment. He believes, however, that surrogates should take place anonymously.

"We have been advised by the adoption and fostering experts that the two groups should not know each other, otherwise there could be unpredictable and possibly harmful effects on all concerned."

"A sister to sister system is particularly undesirable because the child would be left uncertain which was his aunt, and which was his mother. And what would happen if the host mother decided her sister was not bringing the child up properly?"

The new law will not insist on anonymity, an aspect of BMA policy with which Bourn Hall disagrees. Bourn Hall's activities in this controversial area are guided by

its ethics committee, which consists of an Anglican bishop, a gynaecologist unconnected to the clinic, a general practitioner, a lawyer, a scientist and two other lay people.

Audrey Elliott, the committee chairman and a retired teacher, says: "We have been considering the question of IVF surrogacy for many years. The few cases which we have approved have been considered on an individual basis after extensive counselling. We are now trying to formulate strong guidelines which can be used for future cases."

Doctors at Bourn Hall stress that the clinic's £2,500 fee is for medical and counselling services alone, and couples make their own surrogacy arrangements.

Peter Brinsden, the medical director of Bourn Hall, says: "We believe that patients who are unable to bear children of their own can and should be helped. We will not provide a service for the mother who does not want to interrupt her career by bearing her own child."

So far the clinic has transferred two embryos into surrogates, in both cases the sisters of the genetic mothers. Dr Tim Appleton, an ordained priest who provides counselling at Bourn Hall and several other clinics where surrogacy is being considered, says that most of the others on the waiting list are unrelated. "I have been pleasantly surprised; they seem to be people who understand the misery of infertility and want to help. I think the BMA is wrong to recommend anonymity. The genetic parents need to know who is going to bear their child, and the surrogate needs to know where the child is going."

"I see helping people with these arrangements as part of my vocation."

Dr Natalie Macdonald, the ethics spokesman for the BMA, is unhappy that Bourn Hall has ignored the anonymity guidance. "As soon as you start to ponder this the problems are endless. It is because the situation is potentially so messy that we recommend anonymity, for the sake of the child."

ANN KENT

Trauma centres would provide immediate consultant opinion 24 hours a day, every day

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FICTION

An afternoon of nuclear delight

Victoria Glendinning on an observation of the unobservable that is amusing, moving, intellectually activating but never bullying

THE GATE OF ANGELS
By Penelope Fitzgerald
Collins, £12.95

This is an achievement — a metaphysical novel which is entertaining, brief (167 pages), and a love story. It is highly original, yet familiar in the context of clever women's writing — it is as if this were an Iris Murdoch novel condensed by Alice Thomas Ellis in a blithe and ruthless mood. The book's shortness and spareness, combined with the complexity of its concerns, is a miracle of technique. And in spite of its concentrated quality, there still seem airy spaces in the writing and time for leisurely observations about how grass looks in a flooded water-meadow, or about the choice one has to make, on a cart-track, between walking in the ruts and walking on the ridge between them.

The story is set in Cambridge in 1912, when nuclear research was getting under way at the Cavendish Laboratory. Fred, our physicist hero, believes that the soul is a fiction, the mind a function of the body and that nothing exists which cannot be observed through the senses. The things that can be observed — or researched — make up the fibrous matter of the novel, from the make of Fred's bicycle and the pattern its tyres make on a wet road, to the medicines and remedies in a dispensary, the priquettes of coalstove and tealeaves used as fuel, and the way to cook a cow-hell. The straw hat of a working girl is painted with lacquer so it won't collapse in the rain; her sleeves are too short because they are turned under to hide the fraying (some girls ink the frayed part instead).

The sleeves in question are Daisy's. She is a handsome, sensible girl from Brixton, full of angelic wit, with whom Fred becomes entangled, literally, when their bicycles collide on a Cambridge road. Irrationally, Fred finds he is in love with her. But he keeps losing track of her. Fred's problem is that the unreasonable



Chuckling notions about like ping-pong balls: Penelope Fitzgerald uses methods which flatter the reader, who should be able to finish her book in a long afternoon

and the unobservable keep getting in the way of his beliefs. Even the atom is unobservable, "a provisional idea". He belongs to a perverse debating society where members have to argue in favour of propositions in which they do not believe. He has to find arguments for the existence of the soul, and does so, feeling as though he were "hanging upside down". Everything goes topsy-turvy. His mother, a country vicar's wife, has joined the women's suffrage movement. The cows in the Cambridge meadows, demoted by a gale, lie on their backs exposing their vast, pale bellies.

with willow-branches tangled in their horns.

There is a mystery, too, about the accident. The man driving the cart that nearly ran them over, and a third bicyclist, have disappeared. A palaeontologist, who also writes ghost stories — just one of the dotty, authentic-sounding dons who inhabit Ms Fitzgerald's Edwardian Cambridge — comes up with the fact that there was a medieval nunnery on the spot where it happened, and tells a horrific tale of what the nuns did to the bishop's envoy sent to close them down. An old hag is seen and voices heard on the spot at night;

maybe ghostly nuns have dispatched the carter and the third cyclist? Fred is a junior fellow of St Angelicus, known as Angels — a 15th century college so small that no undergraduates live in, or eat in Hall — a nuclear college, one might say. In the inner court is a walnut tree — an old variety, specified as Cornet du Périgord (another example of how everything in this book, which is about the unobservable, is precise and observed). Round and round the walnut tree walks the master of the college, who is blind. If the reader is vaguely reminded of the

There was once a man who said "God Must think it exceedingly odd if he find that this tree continues to be When there's no one about in the Quad"

then it is probably no coincidence; the rhyme is by Ronald Knox, who was Ms Fitzgerald's uncle. She does not presume to pronounce on the "mind-body" problem, or problems of perception, or the existence of a fourth dimension. She chuckles notions around like ping-pong balls; her methods are flattering to the reader, who can finish this book in one long

afternoon, and emerge feeling amused, moved and intellectually activated but not bullied.

Obvious and rational explanations emerge for all the mysteries. But in their very obviousness they seem insufficient. And what about the glorious coincidence that brings Fred and Daisy together on the last page? The college has two ways in — the main gate, through which everyone passes, and a narrow one, which has only opened three times in all its history. The mistake we make, maybe, is thinking that there is only one explanation for what we are and what happens to us.

Observations of the absurd

BOHUMIL Hrabal is regarded as the greatest living Czech novelist. A virtuoso stylist, he brings a cheeky ebullience and a powerful vernacular to the mad sweep of history. The film of *Closely Observed Trains* has made familiar the tale of a young railway guard stricken with premature ejaculation in occupied Czechoslovakia. But this immaculately polished novella from 1966 conveys so much more through its imagery — brutal, sublime and comic.

I Served the King of England, written 20 years later, is less intense, but proceeds with Mr Hrabal's characteristic narrative energy. It concerns the absurd opportunities befalling a Prague waiter who believes himself too small for significant life. Ditie has luck and charm, a quick eye and a willingness to learn what others want. With the odds against him, he quickly acquires money and women. When the Nazis take over Czechoslovakia, he finds himself

PAPERBACKS
Lesley Chamberlain
CLOSELY OBSERVED TRAINS
By Bohumil Hrabal
Abacus, £3.99
I SERVED THE KING OF ENGLAND
By Bohumil Hrabal
Picador, £3.99
THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE DEAD
By Danilo Kis
Faber, £4.99

chosen to inseminate an Aryan maiden. But here the narrative turns and Ditie awakes. By a series of fantastic and sometimes happy rever-

sals, he ends up sharing an idyllic existence with a few animals in a cottage of mirrors. He is at last his own man. Mr Hrabal's mixture of violence, cruelty and easily dazzled senses shows human dignity undone but repairable.

The Encyclopedia of the Dead, Danilo Kis's thematically linked short story collection published in Yugoslavia in 1983, is inferior to *Garden, Ashes*, his early biographical novel, and *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich*. It comprises nine stories mixing fact and fiction in a repeated concern with the nature of identity. The various assemblages of reports, book references, rumours, quotations, family gossip, letters and dreams show human knowledge to be musty and inaccurate compared with how — in the title story — the divinity might see the infinite detail and the mysterious resonances within a single life. Mr Kis was a dark, powerful writer, whose early death last year was a loss.

Hell as other people

CRIME

Lisanne Radice

A STONE OF THE HEART



By John Brady

Penguin, £3.99

DEAD BY MORNING

By Dorothy Simpson

Sphere, £3.50

CHAIN

By Desmond Lowden

BBC, £3.99

The fresh corpse of the victim, last seen 20 years ago, is found in a ditch covered with snow outside the gates of his ancestral home. As Thane explores the circumstances of this death he stumbles upon an astonishing number of possible suspects. Questioning the kind of society which lies at the heart of the crime, Thane reluctantly pursues what is, for him, an unhappy and questionable denouement.

Chain explores the world of fraud and the seriously rich. Crown Prosecutor Michael Cassidy is caught up in a society where success is measured in the amount of sharp deals satisfactorily accomplished, and enemies are dealt with by professional killers. *Chain* has lots of pace and drama, as well as an acute social critique. However, its impact is weakened by the episodic nature of the writing which allows no character to develop fully, a fault no doubt due to the book's origin as a BBC serial.

CRIME fiction, in that it seeks to replace chaos with order, is normally conservative. However, when it comments on society and its ills, it becomes a literature of protest. These three paperbacks, although dissimilar in background, all question the mores of the societies they describe.

John Brady writes about Ireland in the 1980s. He describes characters whose commitment is to a united Ireland, who derive their excitement from a romanticised political involvement and whose intense private life promotes a manic quality from which they are unable to escape. The hero is Sergeant Minogue, a circusman who has recently survived being blown up by a terrorist bomb. This grainy, and now perhaps psychologically flawed, policeman is asked to look into the death of a student, Jarlath Walsh, found, with his head beaten in, lying in the bushes of the cloisters of Trinity College, Dublin. According to Walsh's girlfriend, the murder had nothing to do with drugs or drug dealing, as the university authorities appear to imply. Minogue, despite pressure from his superiors, refuses to accept the official explanation for the killing, and becomes involved in the dubious machinations of some of those he suspects. A parallel interplay of political and criminal investigations adds a taut intricacy to the plot, which is further enriched by the subtle characterisation of the hero.

The advantage of the protagonist as a series character, as both A Stone of the Heart and Dorothy Simpson's *Dead by Morning* demonstrate, is that he or she is able to grow and develop from book to book. But, as the characters appear diminished by their tribulations, so they become more interesting, complex and heroic. This is true of both Minogue and Detective Inspector Thane of *Surrender* CID, the one battling with loss of self-esteem, the other an unwilling participant in a deadly drama of coincidence.

Ms Simpson's latest offering is, as ever, in the traditional genre of the best British crime detection.

Telling tales out of school

ACCORDING to Molesworth, "School is a bit of a shambles", so he would probably have felt at home in Jaci Stephen's secondary modern. But the various "swots, bullies, clannies, milkops, greedy guts and oiks" that made his days in the playground so disagreeable are here more likely to be found in the staff room.

Definitions of a Horse is a step-by-step guide to a year in the life of a provincial comprehensive. Inspired by Gradgrind's putdown in *Hard Times* ("Girl number twenty unable to define a horse"), Ms Stephen takes the equestrian categories of training, grooming, feed and exercise to cast an ironic, generally disparaging light on the ins and outs of the school timetable. Riverside is a disturbing place, about as unpleasant as semolina. Kenneth Salmon, the headmaster, starts off absent-mindedly regretting his sexual incapacity and ends by pacing the school grounds in his pyjamas. New boys are apt to get run over by the school bus. The people in whom parents place their trust spend their time bickering over the pros and cons of a new photocopy.

Worse than this derangement, though, is the chilling organisation operated by some of the characters around the school's periphery: the cook serving hefty meals which tie in thematically with the characters of staff members (innocuous letter spaghetti for the English teacher, more savage undercooked liver for the resident alcoholic); the school-girl playing dangerous games in her CSE English oral exam.

Ms Stephen is a journalist and television critic and her first novel has its moments — grotesquely funny twists and turns — but the maliciousness becomes monotonous, while the governing idea, fine for a short, sharp newspaper piece, soon blunts. It is underlined, too, by a fundamental paradox: the facts and figures it makes play with are, in the end, as Dickens showed, an inadequate means of pinning reality down. Ms Stephen does not fall at the first, but neither does she quite make it to the finish line.

Riverside is a positive haven of delight in comparison with Mr Damphier's special literature class in Nicolas Freeling's *Those in Peril*. Castang, the former criminal investigator, has been pushed, by the force of internal politics, into the art fraud squad, forcing his family to move from Lille to the suburbs of Paris and his children to change schools. His professional and domestic worlds

seem about as safe as the "Moon Lisa", the only threat to equilibrium being an imperious landlady and a flirtatious colleague. But then his daughter's friend comes home after extra-curricular studies with bruises on her breast.

This is an awkward, dislocated thriller, much of which takes place in the mind of the main character, a muddy wrestling ground between police and paternal instinct. For all his indecision, though, Castang remains a sympathetic character. The atmosphere of encroaching threat (betrayal by friends as much as sexual abuse by strangers) is achieved most of all by the use of language. The prose, although written in English, reads like a stilted translation, jerking from present tense to past, dropping nouns, linking snippets of conversation with a single adverb ("Now you can bring the gun out," smiling. "Hand open"). Much of it feels like the briefest of stage directions. This is a tough read, but — strangely — soft at heart.

The heart is just one of the organs that bring down Ann Oakley's heroine in *Matilda's Mistake*. Matilda Cressey is, to all intents and purposes, a paragon of efficiency, cutting a swathe through the hopeless chaos at the Office of Consumer Affairs where she works (as president). Her friends she treats with organised affection, her boyfriend with matter-of-fact contempt. Everything in her life is neatly systemised — until she meets Steven van den Biot.

If you thought Steven van den Biot was the sort of name no one ever has, outside novels, you would be right. It is in fact a false name and the reasons behind the pretence, along with mysterious goings on at his alternative birth centre, galvanise Matilda's watchdog organisation into action. Their investigation, however, is complicated by Steven's charisma. The fact that babies appear to be unaccountably dying and dodgy burial rites performed is very nearly swept under the cover of the natural natal swimming pool.

Here, as in her bestselling *The Men's Room*, Ms Oakley fiddles wilyly with the knots of sexual relationships. But the novel soars laughably into flights of romantic fantasy — Steven "kissing Matilda off to the piercing snow and interconnecting hotel rooms of Finland, and the humour of doctors up to their pin-striped knees in chlorine is soon lost. While the book is an educative process, it is a downward one. Babies and high IQs, it seems, do not mix.

Sabine Durrant

DEFINITIONS OF A HORSE

By Jaci Stephen

Hutchinson, £12.99

THOSE IN PERIL

By Nicolas Freeling

Andre Deutsch, £11.99

MATILDA'S MISTAKE

By Ann Oakley

Vintage, £12.99

Ripping runic read

HORROR

Anne Billson

RUNE

By Christopher Fowler

Century, £7.50

CREED

By James Herbert

Hodder & Stoughton, £12.95

THE FRIGHTENERS

By Stephen Laws

Souvenir Press, £14.95

THE WEREWOLVES OF LONDON

By Brian Stableford

Simon & Schuster, £14.95

THE 1958 film *Night of the Demon* is one of the best supernatural chills ever made, charting Dana Andrews's progress from sceptic to quailing believer. The screenplay was adapted from a story by M.R. James, and Christopher Fowler acknowledges the debt in the introduction to *Rune*. Style and content are far removed from those of the Cambridge antiquary, but Mr Fowler has updated his runic curse, with ancient magic augmented by modern marketing methods.

Mr Fowler kicks off with a doomed man fleeing through Soho, and thereafter the pace barely lets up. The author, a Londoner, manages to cover a fair whack of A-Z territory and send up a few trendy media folk en route to the final showdown. Unusually, the good guys are every bit as entertaining as the bad: a couple of eccentric detectives and a punky girl truck driver are among those who take on the might of a malevolent multinational corporation.

This is a ripping read which provides the occasional unsettling idea, such as the flat which has had all straight edges obliterated from its interior so that no one can sneak a runic hex past its frightened occupant. But why does it take so long for the runes to be recognised as such? Doesn't anyone read Tolkien any more?

James Herbert is this country's best-selling author of horror fiction, having made his name with titles such as *The Rat* and *The Fog*. With *Creed*, Mr Herbert has attempted a change of tack: parts of this novel are virtually a documentary description of the art of the Fleet Street photographer, stalking Jack Nicholson or lying in wait for Woody Allen. Herbert's hero is an unsavoury snapper who takes one photograph too many at an actress's funeral and finds himself pursued by demons who want the naps destroyed. There's too much arch authorial interpolation ("Time to interrupt for a very sketchy rundown on our hero's career..."), but it is an amusing idea executed in knockout style.

Stephen Laws's first three books were set in his native northeast, but *The Frighteners* is set in and around a limbo city which may or may not be London. He tackles an ambitious plot involving a small-time jailbird who becomes literally infected with the essence of evil, isolated and distilled in a government research lab. The possessed punk avenges himself on the mobsters who killed his family by creating whirling djinns out of wastepaper and broken glass, but things get out of hand, of course, and events turn apocalyptic. Mr Laws has not quite got the measure of such a broad canvas, but writes well.

The information that *The Werewolves of London* is the first part of a trilogy would normally be enough to make me run a mile. Mr Brian Stableford is one of the most inventive and original writers working today. This book is set in 1872 and starts off in Egypt, where a party of Victorian gentlemen encounters snakes, scorpions and wolves. The hero sets bitten and has weird dreams, while — back in London — a Crowley-style Satanist intrigues against the city's werewolf population. Dense, historical, almost pompous prose, packed with eccentric digressions on Immanuel Kant, theology and the Victorian class system.

Saturday Review

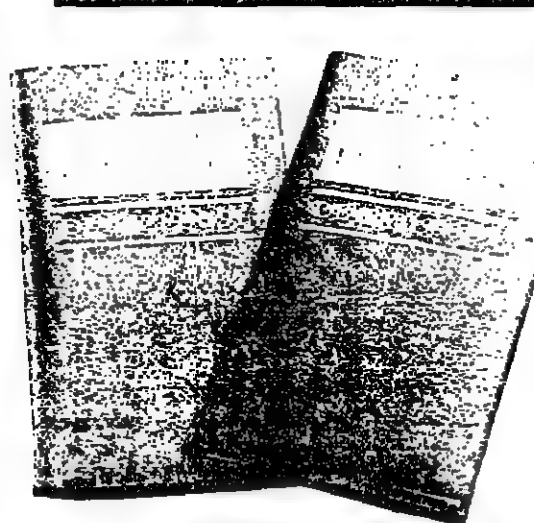
Ego centre

Vienna in the Thirties was full of culture-heroes, about to be swamped by history. Anthony Quinton assesses Elias Canetti's vivid portrait

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however, was perhaps the announcement of BBC autumn schedules, dominated by the return of Bruce Forsyth's *The Generation Game*.

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Rickety fence in need of force

THEATRE

Fences Playhouse, Liverpool

HIS *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* hinted at it, his *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* reinforced the impression, and now *Fences*, the third of his plays to hit Britain within a year, confirms for our audiences what their transatlantic counterparts know. August Wilson is a gritty, gritty, gritty playwright of an ambition rare on either side of the pond: to dramatise the history of black America through a series of, as he hopes, exemplary case-studies.

That is by no means as dauntingly abstract as it sounds. Wilson can be somewhat heavy of hand and long of wind, but his warmth and humanity are never in doubt. That cold commodity, critical esteem, might explain why *Fences* won its Pulitzer prize and even its Tony award. But now it's a serious play cannot run for months and months on Broadway — as this did — unless a good many people have found something in it to arrest and excite them.

What they found in *Fences* was a human force-field, a character of more than average power and magnetism. Troy Maxson left his violent father to emigrate from south to north, batted with success in the segregated baseball leagues, and (as he characteristically puts it) "wrestled with death" during the war, only to end up working as a dustman and living in a shabby

brick house in the urban desert. He manages simultaneously to be a good and bad, imposing burdensome rules on his son and giving his unopened pay-check to his wife each week, yet getting drunk with some regularity, spinning tall stories, and fathering a child by another woman.

All this happens between roughly 1918 and 1958, with Troy as a representative victim of that period. Circumstances have uprooted him, trapped him, inside his head, restlessness and responsibility seem permanently at war. It is a dangerous conflict in someone as vital as he is supposed to be. It also provides quite a challenge for any performer.

Yaphet Kotto, a fine American actor, communicates the responsibility fairly well and the restlessness almost to excess. Especially in the early scenes, he is always fidgeting, scratching himself and looking around. He stage in good Method style. He also mumbles and realistically slurs his words more than those on the back of the stalls might have wished. What he lacks, though, is quite the authority and menace the text ascribes to him. His voice rises from a rough growl to an outright gargle of rage in response to his upset wife or uppity son; but there is not enough emotional TNT inside the casing.

The feeling also grows that Wilson's protagonist is more interesting than his plot. Sally Sogoe, too frisky and lightweight in her early scenes, must take some blame for the failure of Troy's relationship with his wife to come



Magnetic character: Yaphet Kotto as Troy Maxson in *Fences*

fully alive. Indeed, several supporting performances could be stronger. But Troy's battles with his son, who resents being told to take up a trade rather than a football scholarship, are the standard stuff of American drama

these days, and the play's ending is pretty bland. Alby James's direction can, admittedly, do little to change that. Elsewhere, he has work still to do.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THEATRE

Flying Karamazov Brothers St Bride's, Edinburgh

THERE are four of them and they give themselves the correct names, but that is where the connection with Dostoevsky stops. Boldly moustachioed and in floppy velvet caps, they look more like Italian *harlequins* sometimes than impressive Mexican headgear, at others they unfurl their

wild-eyed hippies — except for Smerdyakov, whose red hair grows outward instead of down and rings a bald cranium that doubles as a drum.

Quoting from the Gilbert and Sullivan patter-song they parody, the group is the model of a modern juggling group. The simple backdrop of curtains, columns and frieze is part Temple of Luxor, part skirt-dance. But the columns are gigantic clubs and it is smaller versions of these that the four toss from hand to hand — always from right hand to left, but by no means always to their own left hand.

Working up from the simple routine of one man throwing three

clubs, the other Brothers join in with their complements of three until, in the sequence they call Jazz Juggling, Dimitri (Paul Magid) is throwing and catching clubs with Smerdyakov (Sam Williams) at a rate of two to a bar while either side of him the cool, comic Ivan (Howard J. Patterson) and the entirely silent Fyodor (Tim Furst) are working at one to a bar.

This gives the outer pair time for tricky variations, bounces, underleg throws and the occasional high flier. However, this they would say, is too easy. So Smerdyakov starts dropping the odd club, disarmingly asking

someone to recover it, and then drops another. At one marvellous point Ivan wanders upright across the throwing field, and by choosing exactly the right moment and route, is struck by none of them.

In other routines they manage such intricate tricks as playing a giant xylophone while juggling with the strikers, and juggling with three disparate items proffered by the audience (on my visit a globe, egg whisk and open can of lentil soup). They are a splendid troupe: tremendous fun and display skills that, in truth, have to be seen to be believed.

JEREMY KINGSTON

DANCE

Dérives King's, Edinburgh

"I KNOW it is not really dance," my editor said recently, "but it is not anything else either." This remark could apply to many of the programmes at this year's Edinburgh Festival. The Compagnie Philippe Genty in *Dérives* is a case in point. The title is French for "Drifts".

A choreographer, Mary Underwood, is named, but her contribution is subsidiary to that of Genty as deviser and director. His speciality seems to be sleight of hand: creating imaginative effects which, no doubt, require several stage staff to perform.

The five performers are supplemented by an enormous number of puppets — generally miniatures

of themselves, which manipulate other smaller puppets. They appear as if from nowhere, and vanish just as mysteriously. Nor does the prestidigitator stop there. Clothes which have been moving about the stage suddenly prove to have no wearers. Ropes affix themselves to a woman so that she dances across the stage she weaves a giant spider's web. A model of a city magically turns into a smoking volcano surrounded by palm trees.

A man seems suddenly to have about ten legs all kicking out of one garment. Another briefly develops a third arm. All this is done absolutely smoothly and usually deadpan: there are only momentary hints of emotion, which punctuate a sequence and draw attention to some new discrepancy from everyday expectations.

Occasionally, the action becomes macabre. The sight of a man caught in the spider's web is

amusing, but when he is replaced by a tiny puppet flapping its arms like wings and buzzing angrily, the effect is upsetting. The obsession with nude female puppets — long shiny, enormous hips, tiny heads, and pointed breasts — is also disconcerting, especially when the men begin stroking one of them lasciviously.

For much of the time the performers glide about as if on wheels, in the manner of the Russian *Beriozka* folk dance. Towards the end, one woman does a *Loie Fuller* number in which a big piece of fabric turns into wings of varying shapes.

René Aubry's music is *café* concert stuff, effective but negligible. Eric Wurtz makes a more notable contribution to the show with mysterious lighting and much use of shadow to help Genty's tricks come off perfectly every time.

JOHN PERCIVAL



Man with several legs: One of Genty's slick visual tricks

CONCERT

Bolshoi Orchestra/ Lazarev Usher Hall

THE volume of the Edinburgh Festival audience's applause, both anticipatory and valedictory, for the Bolshoi Orchestra was matched only by the playing itself. For this is the orchestra of the great crescendo and Scotland is certainly at the broad end of it this month.

After last Friday's *Ivan the Terrible* came another Prokofiev choral work, *Alexander Nevsky*, and the ice all cracked under the thundering army boots of "The Battle on the Ice". As the Russian people's chorus clashed with the theme of the two armies, rhythm against rhythm, key against key, the ever-splendid Edinburgh Festival Chorus proved themselves a match for *Ivan's* Bolshoi Opera Chorus. Soprano chest voices had clearly been in training for weeks, and the alto and tenor core withstood repeated assaults from the basses.

So much for the noise. Alexander Lazarev seemed to have more difficulty creating and blending half-tones and fine unisons, and the descent from battle into "The Field of the Dead" only just gave Elena Zarembo breathing space for her aria. It stood chillingly alone, as it should: her heavy, full-bodied mezzo caught the quavering of private emotion within the rhetoric of patriotism.

Nevsky's "cymbal-shod" feet marched their way into Tchaikovsky's territory too. The concert had begun with a performance of

the Orchestral Suite No 3, true to the composer's sense of uninhibited liberation from the formal bounds of the symphony, if less representative of his interest in the subtlety of different combinations.

With outsize forces, movements such as the "Valse melancholique" were too inflated to do anything but deflate the properly elusive effect of the sparse scoring. The accompaniment to the final theme was heavy-handed, too, though its variations were more imaginatively stage-managed.

HILARY FINCH

NEW RELEASES

DE HARD 2 (15): Action-packed but not as good as the first, this sequel to the original, with Bruce Willis's cop trying to win his Washington apartment from a terrorist on another Christmas Eve. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

MAGNON HAS LEFT (12): Italian fairy tale of a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

BACK TO THE FUTURE PART III (PG): A study in crowd scenes to round off the series with some amazing power to the story. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

BLACK RAINBOW (15): Mike Hodges' adaptation of the novel by Michael Chabon, a story of a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

BLIND FURY (15): Fully comic, adventure story by a Japanese samurai series, with a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

THE BOOST (18): Chabon's tale about a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS (15): A comedy about a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

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CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated) on release across the country.

FUTURAMA (PG): The blockbuster of the year — a comedy about a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

THE KILLER (18): A comedy about a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

INTERNAL AFFAIRS (18): A comedy about a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

KAMIKAZE HEARTS (18): A comedy about a young man who is given a wish by a witch, but the wish is a cruel one. (Cinema: Leicester Square (071-930 6111).)

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THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of current theatre in London

House full, returns only. Seats at all prices.

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TELEVISION & RADIO

COMPILED BY GILLIAN MAYEY AND ANNETTE BRUNING
TELEVISION CHOICE PETER WAYMARK/RADIO CHOICE PETER DAVALL

BBC 1

6.00 Cee-fax
6.30 BBC Breakfast News with Nicholas Witchell and Jill Dando 6.55 Regional news and weather
9.00 News and weather
9.05 But First This... Children's entertainment beginning with Belle and Sebastian (9.25 Why Don't You...? stop watching television and take a trip to Blackpool instead (9.30) News and weather followed by The Jacksons 10.30 Playdays (9.10) Five to Eleven, Poetry with pupils from the Moor Park High School, Preston (9.11) News and weather followed by Peaceable Kingdoms, newsworld. American drama series. Robert finds that standing by one's principles can be a lonely business
12.00 News and weather followed by The Garden Party. More from the Botanic Garden in Glasgow. Includes reports on the activities of the Hong Kong-based and criminal syndicate, the three children, the birds, first kisses and the defence sports of judo and karate 12.55 Regional News and weather
1.00 One O'Clock News with Philip Heydon, Weather
1.30 Newsround (Cee-fax)
1.50 Who Dares: Dying for a Living. True stories of people who survive against the odds. David is a professional stuntman; shot at, blown up, and dropped from a great height. Why does he do it? (9.17)
2.20 The Halls of Montezuma (1960) starring Richard Widmark, Jack Palance and, in his scenes, Robert Wagner. A company of American

marines fight their way across a Japanese-occupied Pacific island during the second world war. Efficient action adventure, directed by Lewis Meltzer
4.10 The New Pope Show (9.45) Paul Brown. A half-hour drama series (9.50) Newsround 5.10 Steel Riders. Thriller series from New Zealand. There is a chase through darkened streets, and Sandra and Mike begin their fight-back. (Cee-fax)
5.35 Neighbours (9.1). (Cee-fax). Northern Ireland. Sportsworld, 6.40 Inside Ulster 6.50 Six O'Clock News with Anna Ford and Andrew Harvey. Weather
6.30 Regional News Magazine. Wales: Wales Today; Northern Ireland: Neighbours
7.00 The Pope introduced by Nicky Campbell
7.30 EastEnders. (Cee-fax)
8.00 Life on the Sea. Sarah Greene, Simon Mayo, Sandra Gulland, Nicki Spence and Judith Sargeant. A half-hour drama series including ice-cream made from potatoes, microscopic fungi, pasta from the sea and calorie-free fats
8.30 Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em. Michael Crawford's bumbling funny-man Frank Spencer takes a crash-course in public relations (9.1). Northern Ireland: David's Army
9.00 Nine O'Clock News with Michael Buerk, Weather
9.30 The Play on One: Separation. CHOICE: Rosanna Arquette's much-publicised British television debut finds her playing opposite David Suchet in Tom Kempster's two-episode drama about a crippled young American actress and an egomaniacal British writer who strike up an unlikely friendship over the transatlantic telephone line. Both are married,



Seeking a lifeline: David Suchet (9.30pm)

she physically, he emotionally, and on his side at least, the professional relationship (she appears in an off-off-Broadway production of his play) is a means to resolving his personal hang-ups. The play is written for the theatre and despite the use of black and white stills to punctuate the scenes the director, Barry Davis, makes little attempt to disguise its stage origins. But this is an actor's piece. Arquette gives the sort of sparkling performance that has become her trademark in films, while Suchet's cool, steady, satirical neurotic is a million miles from his recently assured Hercule Poirot. (Cee-fax)
10.50 Cricket: Third Test. Richie Benaud introduces highlights of the first day's play between England and India in the third and final test from the Oval
11.20 James Brown in East Berlin. The godfather of Soul performs in his distinctive style
12.10am Weather

BBC 2

6.45 Open University: Inner-City Story: Opposing Racism. Ends 7.10
9.00 Mastermind 1990 (9)
9.30 The Sacred Horses of Tamil Nadu. The first recording on film of an ancient Hindu festival, dedicating huge clay horses to the god Ayar (9.30) It's That Meat Again. The Robert warlike cookery are recalled by chef Michael Barry. Coupons in hand, two families from Southampton live a six-week experiment surviving on 1942 rations
10.30 Arthur Negus Enjoys. Arthur takes a stroll around Blackpool, well known for horse events, but less for the collection of antiques contained within, particularly furniture and clocks (9.10) Cricket: Third Test. Tony Lewis introduces live coverage of the opening day's play between England and India from the Oval
1.05 Past and Present Preserved: Museum for Bicycles 'Velocrama'. Situated on the River Wal in the Netherlands, this museum charts the history of the bicycle, from its early wooden days to the advanced machines of today
1.20 Mr. Bean. Ray Brooks with more animated adventures (9.17)
1.35 Cricket: Third Test. Live coverage of the whole of the afternoon's play between England and India from the Oval. Richie Benaud and Jack Barnister commentate. Ray Lingwood and Sam Cavanagh summarise. Includes at 2.00 and 3.00 News and weather; and at 3.50 Regional news and weather
6.30 Show Jumping. David Vire introduces highlights of the first day's competition from Hickstead

BBC 2

7.10 A Day in the Life of Sam the Dog. Portrait of an ordinary day in the ordinary life of an ordinary dog
7.35 Business Matters: The Company. CHOICE: The business programme is more about people than profits this week as it explores the changing role of the corporate wife. Yvonne Roberts interviews three women who neatly illustrate different facets of the role. Representing the traditional pre-feminist spouse is Janilyn McConnell, married for 38 years to an oil industry executive during which time she has suppressed her own interests to help his career, entertain his business guests and become a leading light in the pet-care 'wives' group. Sam Carr, married to the chairman of Spain's second-largest chain store, was also a full-time company wife who moved 13 times to support her husband's career. Then she started a career of her own and the couple now live in different cities. Amanda Slayton has a demanding job in public relations and a two-year-old son and earns more than her partner, an obliging 'new man' willing to share the domestic chores. Wales: Gardening of today
8.00 The 'Star' Maxwell Story. Above average American comedy series starring Danny Coleman
8.25 On the Line. Sue Mott and Ray Stubbs ask whether football can survive in its present form
9.00 The Travel Show. Penny Junior guides us around the Gower Peninsula at 2.00 and 3.00 News and weather; and at 3.50 Regional news and weather
9.30 The Tracey Ullman Show. Manu Herry is the guest



Media Movers: Tracey Ullman (9.30pm)

9.50 Strangers with Candy. Award-winning eight-part series on life in one of Britain's overcrowded maximum-security prisons. Known as the Block, D1 is Strangers' punishment for breaking prison rules. The segregation unit is home to the prison's most subversive element. Tensions run high, especially when one prisoner grates on another or an anguished detainee is placed in the controversial strip cell (9)
10.30 Newsnight with Peter Snow
11.15 Edinburgh Nights. More Festival news from Kirsty Wark and Tracy McElduff 11.55 Weather
12.00 Weekend Outlook. A preview of this weekend's Open University programmes
12.05am Open University: Special Needs in Education. The impact of the 1977 Pech Report on tertiary and secondary education in Scotland on remedial education in Aberdeen, Perthshire and Glasgow. Ends 12.35am

ITV LONDON

6.00 TV-am
9.25 He-Man and the Masters of the Universe (9.30) Thames News and weather
9.55 Inspector Gadget (9.10) 10.25 Vicky
10.55 Treasure Island in Outer Space
11.50 Thames News and weather
11.55 Porky Pig 12.05 The Riddlers (9.1)
12.25 Home and Away 12.55 Thames News and weather
1.00 News at One with John Suchet, Weather
1.20 Daytime Green: The Earth Dwellers' Guide. Actor Tony Robinson attacks the government's water privatisation scheme; the Birmingham Chinn family explores further options for a greener lifestyle. Rob Whitehouse asks whether Volvo's plans for an environmentally friendly car are realistic; and Howard Drury offers organic gardening tips (9)
1.50 Country Practice
2.20 Dear Miriam. Dr Miriam Stoppard's problem page advice to the small screen, offering advice and information on anything from marriage problems to mental illness
2.50 What's My Line? Angela Rippon hosts the guess-the-occupation game, well past its sell-by date. Team captains Jack Cooper and Roy Hudd are assisted by Simon Williams and Kim Hartman 3.15 News headlines 3.20 Thames News and weather
3.25 The Young Doctors

3.55 The Raggy Dolls 4.10 Disney's Duck Tales 4.35 Speedy and Daffy 4.40 The Cup. The last of three programmes from the European Broadcasting Union drama exchange project for children is a Belgian adventure story. The Spiders and the Rockys are two skateboarding gangs. Romance blossoms between Jack's younger sister and Mike. However, Jack and Mike are the leaders of the two gangs and Jack is determined to have his revenge at the skateboarding championship
5.10 Blockbusters
5.40 News with Sue Carpenter. Weather
5.55 Thames Help. Debt problems? Jackie Sprackley offers advice 6.00 Home and Away (9.1) 6.30 Thames News and weather
7.00 Emmerdale. (Oracle)
7.30 Nature Watch: Lost in the Garden of Eden. Julian Pitt-Rivers presents the nature series which today examines the lifestyle of large orange orangutans. According to Dr Birute Galdikas, these engaging creatures have never left the garden of Eden. But now her habitat is threatened, forcing the doctor to provide a halfway house for these innocent victims
8.00 The Bill: My Favourite Things. The police series which, despite having to find new stories each week, continues to leave all rivals standing. In tonight's episode, Sun Hill is thrown into chaos by an impending demonstration and the high-handed Inspector Monroe (Colin Tarrant). (Oracle)

8.30 Jimmy's. Real-life drama from the country's biggest teaching hospital, St James's in Leeds
9.00 L.A. Law. More case loads for the sophisticated American law firm. Starring Harry Hamlin, Susan Day and Corbin Bernsen. (Oracle)
10.00 News at Ten with Sandy Gall and John Somerville. Weather 10.30 Thames News and weather
10.35 Thames Summer Season: A Room of One's Own. Virginia Woolf made an impassioned plea to the women of the twenties to possess money and a room of their own. Her controversial statement has as much impact today as it did then. Eileen Atkins willly recreated Woolf's lecture on the London stage last year and her acclaimed performance has now been adapted for television
11.25 Prisoner: Cell Block H
12.30am It's My Belief. Nick Stuart talks to Victor Guazzelli, the Roman Catholic bishop who grew up in the East End of London
1.00 Film: Esther and the King (1962). Richard Egan and Joan Collins star in Richard Walsh's tedious biblical epic about a Jewish girl chosen to be the new wife of the Persian king
3.00 The Invisible Man: Bank Raid (b/w). More invisible cloak-and-dagger 3.30 Funny Farm. Scottish humour
4.00 The New Seasons. Music for night owls with What? Noise in concert at the Manchester Hacienda Club
4.30 America's Top 10 (9)
5.00 ITN Morning News with Phil Roman. Ends 6.00

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Noah's Ark. The nature programme looks at Grey's Glacier in the extreme south of Chile (9)
6.20 Business Daily
6.30 The Channel Four Daily
9.25 The Art of Landscape. Landscape painting accompanied by music
11.00 As It Happens. Michael Groh and his unbridled camera crew visit the Isle of Skye and go in search of the Loch Ness monster
12.00 Scotland's War: General Sikorski's Scotsmen. The fourth of seven programmes tells the story of the Polish general's exile in Scotland during the second world war with 25,000 of his men
12.30 Business Daily. Financial and business news
1.00 Sasuna Street (9)
2.00 Return to Nursing: Good Practice. An Open College programme looking at areas of nursing that have changed and developed over the past few years. The weekly clinical practices
2.30 Channel Four Racing from York. Introduced by Brough Scott and featuring the Moore's Convivial Maiden Stakes (3.10); Keeneland Nunthorpe Stakes (3.45); and the Pacemaker Update Lowther Stakes (4.15)
4.30 Countdown. Words and numbers game
5.00 Film: Dick Barton Strikes Back (1949, b/w) starring Don Stanard. Percy Thrills as special agent Dick Barton. Britain from a gang of international villains and their lethal atomic ray. Strangely, Barton, a poor shadow of the radio series. Directed by Godfrey Grayson
6.20 Animation: Success/The Fly. Animated films from Hungary



Julie Welch's hopes for football (8.00pm)

8.00 Opinions: Julie Welch - The Search for Love and Glory. CHOICE: Julie Welch presents a personal view of football from the perspective of a child star-struck on Danny Blanchflower and a journalist who breached a male stronghold and became the country's first woman soccer reporter. Her essay is a mixture of nostalgia, acute social observation and a heartfelt hope that the game she once adored can be rescued from the hooligans, the politicians, the agents and the money-men. Welch brilliantly evokes her first memories of the game, catching the results over the wireless during Saturday afternoon tea and following the giants of the day, Matthews, Mannion and Finney, through their pictures in the newspapers. No telly salvation then. Her 13 years as a reporter started with George Best and ended in crowd disasters, violence and greed. The moment she fell out of love with football was when a

manager she had long admired asked for money for an interview
8.30 My Two Dads: The Wedge. Comedy about an orphaned 12-year-old girl charged into the care of two men
9.00 Film: The Day After Tomorrow. An actor often at his best playing flawed heroes, is "Buzz" Aldrin in a superior television movie about the astronaut's mental breakdown two years after his historic moon landing in 1969. Famously but unsensationally, the film charts Aldrin's growing disillusion as powers of reason start to leave him and he can no longer cope with a high-pressure life. By filming at NASA locations at Houston, Texas, and in Los Angeles, and using footage of the moon light, the director, Jody Dorn, effectively establishes the public context but the story is essentially a private one. It involves Aldrin's relationship with, on the one hand, his father (Ralph Bellamy), who cannot come to terms with his son's weakness, and, on the other, his wife (Shirley Knight), finally alienated by his remoteness. Return to Earth is strongly acted throughout and treats its theme with simple sincerity
10.25 Billy the Fish. Episodes five and six of the football cartoon character, with the voices of Harry Enfield (9)
10.30 Drop Dead Donkey. Comedy drama set in a television news agency
11.00 Chicken Ranch (1982). The Nick Broomfield documentary season continues with his revealing study of the girls and the madams of the Chicken Ranch, a luxurious and legalised brothel in the Nevada desert
12.30am Film: Orchestra Rehearsal (1978) starring Baldwin Bees, Clara Cosentino and Elizabeth Labi. Federico Fellini's study in authoritarianism in which he uses the analogy of an orchestra in rehearsal. With English subtitles. Ends 1.55

RADIO 1

Full stereo and MW
3.00am Alan Lister 6.30am Simon Mayo 9.00am Simon Mayo 11.00am Radio 1 12.00am Radio 1
6.00am Mike Read in the Morning 6.30am Mike Read in the Morning 6.50am Mike Read in the Morning 7.00am Mike Read in the Morning 7.10am Mike Read in the Morning 7.20am Mike Read in the Morning 7.30am Mike Read in the Morning 7.40am Mike Read in the Morning 7.50am Mike Read in the Morning 8.00am Mike Read in the Morning 8.10am Mike Read in the Morning 8.20am Mike Read in the Morning 8.30am Mike Read in the Morning 8.40am Mike Read in the Morning 8.50am Mike Read in the Morning 9.00am Mike Read in the Morning 9.10am Mike Read in the Morning 9.20am Mike Read in the Morning 9.30am Mike Read in the Morning 9.40am Mike Read in the Morning 9.50am Mike Read in the Morning 10.00am Mike Read in the Morning 10.10am Mike Read in the Morning 10.20am Mike Read in the Morning 10.30am Mike Read in the Morning 10.40am Mike Read in the Morning 10.50am Mike Read in the Morning 11.00am Mike Read in the Morning 11.10am Mike Read in the Morning 11.20am Mike Read in the Morning 11.30am Mike Read in the 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● BUSINESS AND FINANCE 19-23
● DEGREE COURSE VACANCIES 25
● SPORT 26-30

THE TIMES

BUSINESS

THURSDAY AUGUST 23 1990

City Editor
John Bell

BICC is still keen to build rail link

BICC has no interest in a minority stake in PowerGen, the electricity generating company being privatised, but is still keen to build the fast rail link from London to the Channel tunnel, despite an apparent lack of interest from the government, Robin Biggam, the chief executive, said.

The construction-to-cables group was announcing pre-tax profits ahead from £93 million to £100 million in the six months to end-June, and an interim dividend increased from 5.75p to 6p, in line with the dividend forecast made at the time of the convertible rights issue last month.

The group saw a slowdown in its British housebuilding and property activities and in Australia, but cables in Britain and North America performed well while the British contracting and engineering businesses had order books 6 per cent higher than a year ago.

BICC has been helped by the privatisation of the power industry, with volumes from that side of the business up 10 per cent year-on-year as Treasury spending controls are relaxed, and has been mentioned as a possible shareholder in any management buyout of PowerGen. But Mr Biggam said the company had no interest in a minority stake that did not bring with it any management control.

It was still keen to build the fast Channel tunnel rail link, through its Eurorail joint venture with Trafalgar House.

Temper, page 21

Rentokil ahead

Rentokil, the pest control and tropical plant group, continues to fulfil its promise of achieving 20 per cent growth, with pre-tax profits for the six months ended June of £34.5 million against £28 million turnover of £149.1 million (£133.3 million). Further growth is expected in the second half, the board says. The interim dividend rises from 0.865p to 1.06p.

Temper, page 21

THE HOUR

US dollar 1.9275 (+0.0065)
W German mark 2.9634 (+0.0034)
Exchange index 95.9 (+0.1)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 Share 1622.5 (+5.8)
FT-SE 100 2104.8 (-3.3)
New York Dow Jones 2583.42 (-20.54)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 25210.91 (-1086.93)
Closing Prices ... Page 23

Major indices and major changes

Page 22

INTEREST RATES

London Bank Base: 15%
3-month interbank 15.14%
3-month eligible bills 14.14%
US: Prime Rate 10%
Federal Funds 7.5%
3-month Treasury Bills 7.56-7.54%
30-year bonds 9.72-9.67%

CURRENCIES

London: \$1.9275
New York: \$1.9281
DM 3.5634
DM 3.5634
Sfr 2.4537
Sfr 2.4537
FF 10.751
FF 10.751
Yen 211.13
Yen 211.13
Index 95.9
Index 95.9
ECU 1.66938
ECU 1.66938
SDR 1.72218
SDR 1.72218
ECU 1.66938
ECU 1.66938

GOLD

London Fixing: AM \$410.00
Close \$410.25-410.75
New York: 213.25
Comex \$409.60-410.10

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Sep) ... \$29.05/bbl (\$29.00)
Dated Brent latest trading price

TOURIST RATES

	Bank	Bank
Australia \$	2.46	2.30
Austria Sch	21.50	21.50
Belgium F	64.50	60.50
Canada C	2.28	2.15
Denmark Kr	12.20	11.51
France F	7.40	7.00
Germany DM	10.47	9.97
Greece Dr	301	285
Hong Kong \$	35.55	14.85
Italy L	1.18	1.08
Japan Yen	235.0	215.0
Netherlands Gld	26.50	27.50
Norway Kr	12.12	11.42
Portugal Esc	207.25	201.25
Spain Ptas	165	153
Sweden Kr	11.49	10.87
Switzerland Fr	2.48	2.40
Turkey Lira	5270	4970
USA \$	2.05	1.95
Yugoslavia Dnr	25.00	18.00

Notes for small denomination bank only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques.
Retail Price Index 128.9 (Aug)

OS

Soaring fuel costs raise concern over Dan-Air

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

CONCERN was growing last night over Dan-Air, the troubled charter airline, after the recent rises in fuel prices and the sharp decline in charter holiday bookings.

The share price of Davies & Newman, the parent company, was static at 355p compared with 575p in June when it was hoped a takeover could be arranged.

Dan-Air, Britain's second largest charter airline with 51 aircraft, has been badly affected by rising fuel

costs and this summer's decline in package holidays. This was compounded this week by the decision of Airtours, Britain's fourth biggest tour operator, to form its own airline.

Dan-Air had the equivalent of five aircraft committed to Airtours to operate out of Stansted, Manchester, and Birmingham, but now seems likely to lose this important customer. Airtours could still use two Dan-Air jets next summer despite its new airline, the creation of which is

certain to lead to further cutbacks at Dan-Air.

Already it has announced plans to dispose of five jets including an Airbus A300 and is expected to cut its fleet by another four aircraft over the next few weeks. At the same time, the company is closing its main London office and transferring 150 staff who work there to Horley, Surrey, to consolidate its operations close to Gatwick airport.

Dan-Air does not have its own tour operator on whom it can rely

to provide passengers for its aircraft while its rivals — such as Britannia and Air Europe can rely on Thomson and ILG to fill seats. This means Dan-Air has to fight for business where it can find it, in a market which looks as if it is heading towards recession.

Although increased fuel costs in charter operations — which have already added about £1 per passenger for every hour a jet is in the air — can be passed on to the tour operator, scheduled services have either to bear the brunt or increase

fares and so reduce still further the demand for seats.

Again Dan-Air has been more severely affected by the fuel price rise than other airlines because of its poor fuel efficiency of many of its older aircraft. The airline has 12 Boeing 727 and 17 BAC 1-11s in its fleet, all of which are extremely heavy on fuel compared with the quiet, fuel-efficient modern jets flown by many of its rivals.

The airline owns many of the older aircraft, which now have a low residual value, but has leased

the more valuable newer jets in its fleet, such as the three Boeing 737-400s and four Bae 146s.

Fred Newman, chairman of Davies & Newman, is recognised as one of the shrewdest men in the business and, despite the problems, the company remains confident the proposed cut-backs and reorganisation will see it through.

Mr Newman, together with his three most senior executives, yesterday went to the Civil Aviation Authority to meet officials. It was, they said, "a routine meeting".

Trade deficit in surprise leap to £1.4bn

By RODNEY LORD, ECONOMICS EDITOR

BRITAIN'S trade gap widened last month against expectations, boosting the current account deficit from £1.26 billion to £1.39 billion. Analysts said the Treasury's forecast of a £1.5 billion deficit for the year was now unlikely.

The figures were published against a background of faster-than-expected growth of 2½ per cent in the second quarter. Although the increase occurred mainly in the energy sector, manufacturing was also buoyant, raising doubts about the economic slowdown.

Detailed figures for the balance of payments in 1989 were also published yesterday in the Central Statistical Office's annual Pink Book. An upward revision from £4.05 billion to £4.71 billion in the estimated surplus on invisibles last year was offset by higher imports, leaving the current account deficit for 1989 unchanged at £19.1 billion.

The trade data were poorly

received by the City though they had little effect on foreign exchange or stock markets, which were more worried about the confrontation in the Gulf. Sterling closed up 0.1 on its trade-weighted index at 95.9, up 65 points against the dollar at \$1.9275 and 34 points higher at DM2.9934.

Stephen Hannah of County NatWest said: "If one takes into account that the figures were helped by a favourable revision to the invisibles and an improvement in the terms of trade, they are not very encouraging. The combination of a high exchange rate and high wage growth is just not on: something has to give."

Exports last month fell by 3½ per cent to £8.28 billion and imports were 2 per cent lower at £9.97 billion, leaving a trade deficit of £1.69 billion. In the light of the Pink Book figures, the estimated surplus on invisibles has been revised upwards from £200 million a month to £300 million in the April-July period.

Underlying trends in Britain's trade stayed relatively favourable. The volume of exports in the past three months, excluding oil and erratic items, rose 2 per cent on the previous three months and 9½ per cent on the same period last time. Imports on the same basis rose 1 per cent on three months earlier and 2 per cent on a year earlier.

Gordon Brown, the shadow trade secretary, said: "The higher-than-expected deficit at £1.4 billion — and a huge £10.25 billion for the year so far — combined with the grim OECD forecasts, means that interest rates will remain high for industry and homeowners for many months to come, and shows a British economy near the bottom of the European league for trade as well as interest rates, inflation, growth and investment."

The Pink Book shows last year's current account deficit financed by identified net capital inflows of £4 billion and a balancing item, representing errors and omissions in the figures, of £15.13 billion. The size of the balancing item in recent years "must throw doubt on the quality of the figures", says the CSO.

Trends in invisible trade include a rise in the surplus on services from £4.5 billion in 1988 to £4.7 billion last year, a fall in the surplus on interest, profits and dividends from £5 billion to £4.6 billion and a wider deficit on transfers of £4.6 billion against £3.5 billion. Within services, sea transport had a small surplus for the first time since 1980.

Rally runs out of steam

By MATTHEW BOND

LONDON shares made a brave attempt at a rally yesterday, after Tuesday's 50-point losses on both sides of the Atlantic. By midday the FT-SE 100 index was up 18 points, with brokers reporting signs of bargain hunting.

But as Wall Street opened flat and moved lower, London's rally faded. London spent the afternoon tracking

Wall Street, closing 3.3 lower at 2,104.8. Although American dealers remain very nervous about events in the Middle East, there is growing concern about the American economy and the impact of a recession on American shares.

Gold closed \$330 lower at \$410.50 an ounce in London. Silver moved in sympathy, closing 4p down at 267.25p.

Stock markets, page 22

Queensway 'to pay out on £15m insurance'

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

LOWNDES Queensway customers who paid deposits for furniture and carpets before the company went into liquidation a week ago are expected to claim on Lowndes' £15 million insurance policy.

But none of the estimated 45,000 customers is likely to receive any money for at least two months.

Jonathan Phillips, a partner with Price Waterhouse, the accountant which has been appointed to administer the insurance policy, said he aimed to pay out on the policy by Christmas.

He said it was too early to say whether all the claims would be met in full. However, he added that he would be disappointed if customers received less than 50 per cent of their money back and said he was still optimistic that they would receive 100 per cent.

Assuming the figure of

45,000 claimants is correct, the average payout under the fund would be £333 before the expenses of processing the claims have been taken into account.

But in the weeks before Lowndes went into receivership, many customers were asked to pay the full amount for their goods.

Some customers paid more than £700 for carpets which



Places policy: Ireland

they have yet to receive. Lowndes is believed to have had sales of £5 million to £6 million a week, before the receivership.

The insurance policy was put in place by Norman Ireland, an ex-BTR finance director who was the Lowndes chairman before receivership.

Mr Phillips said the total level of claims would not be known for several weeks. Some customers may yet receive their goods and those who paid by credit card may want to claim through their credit card company. This would cut the level of claims. About 30 per cent of Lowndes sales were by credit card.

In a separate development, the H Plan group, which makes and fits bedroom and kitchen furniture went into receivership with debts of £5 million yesterday. Half of the 200 employees have been made redundant.

Erskine seeks enquiry on hoax

By NEIL BENNETT

ERSKINE House, the office equipment supplier, has demanded an international stock exchange enquiry after fraudulent calls to market-makers in the City caused a collapse in its share price.

Share dealers at Security Pacific Hoare Govett, the securities house and Erskine's broker, were called on Tuesday by someone who claimed to be an Erskine director in the South of France. He asked if he could sell 200,000 shares and said that Brian McGillivray, the company chairman, was also planning to sell part of his holding. The hoaxer also called Smith New Court, one of the other three market-makers in Erskine shares.

The caller, however, refused to leave a name, and the market-makers became suspicious when they learnt that none of the Erskine directors, apart from the chairman, owned so many shares. Hoare

Govett's analysts and corporate finance department were asked to investigate, but before they had proved the story was false, the shares had plummeted from 64p to 45p on speculation that Mr McGillivray was selling shares. They recovered to 54p.

Erskine yesterday issued a statement to the stock exchange. "The company has requested the stock exchange to investigate recent dealings in its shares which it believes have been driven largely by the circulation of false rumours. Neither Mr McGillivray, or any other director, has sold any shares in the company nor has any present intention of doing so."

The stock exchange would not comment on whether it would launch an enquiry, but it normally does after any unusual share price move. Its investigators are expected to ask Hoare Govett for its dealing room tapes, since all calls to

market-makers are recorded. It will also examine recent trading records to see if anyone was selling Erskine shares short.

The hoax is the latest blow to Erskine's share price, which has slid from 220p at the start of the year. In March, the company gave a profits warning, and in June it announced flat annual pre-tax profits of £15.6 million, which knocked £1 from the price. Discovery of the fraud allowed the shares to gain 12p to 66p yesterday, before they slid back to 60p. They are still trading on a prospective p/e ratio of three on Hoare Govett's profits forecast of £17 million for the year to March.

"Anything in this price range is ridiculous," said Mr McGillivray, who bought 100,000 shares last April at almost double the current value. "That one item yesterday is just a part of a thoroughly unsatisfactory situation. You are just looking at very low trading volumes."

Marley on the floor



PRE-TAX profits at Marley, the roof tiles, bricks and blocks group, have plunged from £34.3 million to £16 million in the first six months of the year. The decline reflects the slump in building activity, the group said.

Electrolux sheds 15,000 jobs

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU
EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

ELECTROLUX, the Swedish group and the world's largest manufacturer of household goods, is to shed 15,000 jobs worldwide, as part of a restructuring programme.

The company, which has made about 100 acquisitions during the 1980s, including Italy's Zanussi and West Germany's Zanker, both white goods manufacturers, has been hit by a downturn in profits by its industrial products unit, which last year accounted for some 20 per cent of total sales.

Granges, its largest interest in the sector, which specialises in the distribution of aluminium products, is believed to be badly affected, due to higher aluminium prices and reduced demand.

The company did not specify details of the restructuring programme, other than its cost, estimated to be between Kr300 million and Kr700 million.

This year, about 8,000 employees, out of a total workforce of 153,000, will lose their jobs. The jobs are not likely to hit operations in Britain, which include its Tricity and Bendix white goods operations, and Flymo.

The company reported disappointing profits for the first half this year. Profits after financial items were down from Kr1.99 billion to Kr1.01 billion (£92 million). Turnover also fell, from Kr44.39 billion to Kr43.64 billion.

Salih considers taking Steak Houses private

By JONATHAN PRYNN

ALLI Salih, the chairman and managing director of Aberdeen Steak Houses, the restaurant chain, is considering going private after five years on the USM.

Steak Houses has been built up from London Earing House, which went into liquidation in 1975.

Mr Salih already owns 78 per cent of Aberdeen Steak

Houses and has indicated that any offer will be pitched close to the 67p at which the company was floated on the USM in 1985.

Shares were changing hands at 48p immediately before the announcement. After soaring to 60p, they fell again to close at 51p, up just 3p on the day.

Restated pre-tax profits fell 86 per cent to £166,000. There is no final dividend.

Oil prices climb to highest in five years

By MARTIN BARROW

OIL prices continued their relentless climb yesterday after President Bush authorised the call-up of up to 40,000 reservists to support American forces in Saudi Arabia.

In London, October Brent surged 60 cents to \$28.27, while in New York crude oil futures rose to a five-year high of \$30 after Saudi Arabia halted exports of some petroleum products to Japan.

Trading remained volatile despite moves by Opec to arrange an informal meeting of selected members in Vienna this weekend. Such a meeting could pave the way for a full emergency session attended by Saudi Arabia, which has threatened to increase oil production unilaterally if the cartel fails to reach an agreement.

Meanwhile, the Saudi Refining and Marketing Company (Samarec) notified Japanese customers that it could not supply any gas oil, jet or dual-purpose kerosene for September.

Products destined for Japan will now be used by military forces in the Middle East. The United States has tendered for another 4.6 million barrels of jet fuel for its airforce.

British oil production fell sharply in July as a result of maintenance shutdowns in the North Sea, according to the Royal Bank of Scotland's monthly oil index.

Output fell from 1.93 million barrels a day in June to 1.72 million bdp last month, a decline of 11 per cent, to the lowest level since June 1989. However, Britain remained self-sufficient in oil, with production levels about 200,000 barrels above consumption.

The oilfield most affected by maintenance work was Shell's Brent complex, with three out of four platforms out of action.

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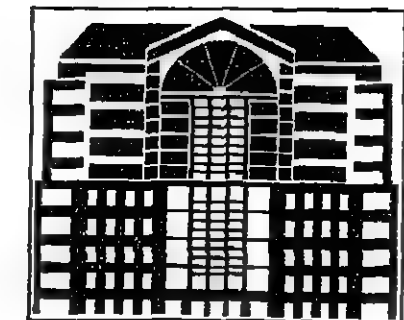
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STOCK MARKET

Chartists hope to flush out bargain buyers once again

By MATTHEW BOND

WITH the American market eventually trimming Tuesday's fall to 52 points, London decided that its 48-point fall was overdue in the absence of any genuine reports of military action in the Gulf.

As a result, shares opened higher and by midday the FTSE 100 index had risen by more than 18 points. However, as it became clear that Wall Street was going to open flat at best, London's rally ran out of steam.

Buyers remained largely on the sidelines with only 333 million shares changing hands. By the close, the FTSE 100 index stood 3.3 lower at 2,104.8. What bargain hunting there was appeared to be in the larger companies, with the 100 closing 9.9 points up at 1,625.6. At the longer end, gilts rose by close to three-quarters of a point.

The chart shows that over the past year there has been clear support for FTSE 100 stocks at 2,100. Twice in the past 12 months the market has fallen to that level, only to rise again quickly. Could it happen a third time?

With the index sliding towards that level again, dealers reported some tentative signs of buying, despite the continuing uncertainty in the Middle East. However, without some positive signal from the American market, buyers in

London are likely to remain few and far between.

While they wait for that signal, domestic economic indicators, such as July's £1.39 billion trade deficit, are likely to be ignored.

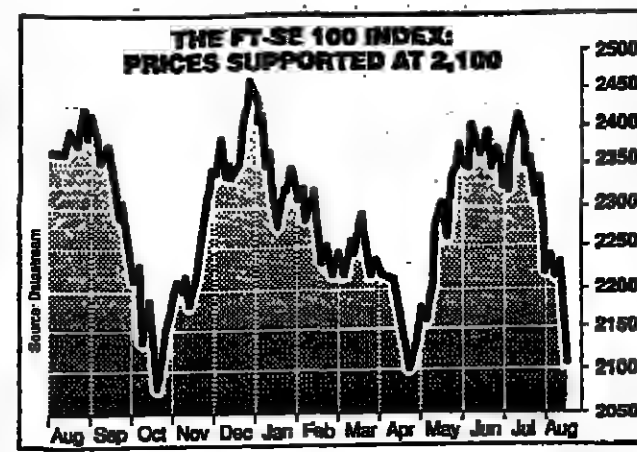
Brent Walker was on the way down again, still reflecting disappointment that the company's 50 per cent stake in the Trocadero had not yet been sold. The shares, at one point, fell 9p to 193p, before recovering to 198p, 4p down on the day.

George Walker, the Brent Walker chairman, is still successfully making smaller disposals. He has just sold a 12-acre block from the group's

Shares in Total, the textile group, rose 2p to 75p, following the announcement that Cha Chi-ming was the beneficial owner of a 4.4 per cent stake. Mr Cha is a Hong Kong businessman and is controlling shareholder in China Dye Works.

Elstree film complex to Tesco for £19 million. Brent Walker bought the 32-acre film studio in two deals worth a total of £35 million, so the disposal recoups a large proportion of the outlay and reduces the cost of holding one of Britain's best known film studios.

Among the big shares bouncing back was Reuters, which before yesterday's ses-



sion had lost 250 points in four days on profit downgrading, worried about new systems and the lack of confidence in America. Reassuring words appear to have been muttered to key brokers stopping the rot for now. The shares improved 30p to 789p.

WPP Group, owner of J Walter Thompson and Ogilvy & Mather, the advertising agencies, and another big casualty in recent days, also showed renewed signs of life, adding 14p to 478p. Saatchi & Saatchi, on the other hand, fell 2p to 59p.

For the few buyers around, it was a day for the big stocks, with a number of brokers' buy circulars moving share prices upwards. GEC, the electronics company, rose 5.5p to 184p, helped by the recommenda-

tion of James Capel. BTR added 3p to 347p with the help of Hoare Govett. However, the approval of Kleinwort Benson did little to help Guinness, which has been hit recently by worries over the performance of LVMH, its 24 per cent owned subsidiary, and shareholder. After jumping to 658p on KB's raised current year profit forecast, the shares ran back to close 4p lower at 646p.

ICI moved 8p higher at one point, before losing all its gains to close unchanged at 901p. But on the way down on worries about international currency exposure were Glaxo, down 3p to 697p, Wellcome, 5p lower at 450p and SmithKline Beecham, 3.5p off at 509p.

The news that Commercial Union had a 4.12 per cent

stake in Barnett Development, put 5p on the shares to 154p. The housebuilding sector has not exactly been awash with institutional support of late, so the increased stake was seen as an encouraging sign.

Moving the other way was Bellway, 9p lower at 179p, following the sale of a line of stock below the market price. Housing profits, through its Bellway Beauty arm, have contributed to the shadow hanging over BICC, the cable and construction group. So yesterday's better than expected interim profits of £100 million helped add 10p to the shares to 338p.

In the property sector, Sutcliffe, Speakman, the activated carbon and engineering group still seeking a new trading range, is down another 5p to 52p. Before last week's pessimistic annual meeting statement, the company stood at 168p.

Rosehaugh added 5p to 115p, on continuing talk that a phase of its jointly-owned Broadgate complex was about to be sold.

Priest Marlow shed 12p to 55p, on speculation that an equity issue was more likely than a bid. But perhaps the most surprising feature of all was Speyhawk, unchanged for the first time in days at 283p.

TOKYO

Nikkei in 1,087 point slide

Tokyo

THE Gulf troubles, future-related selling and worries about higher interest rates sent shares diving again, with the Nikkei index hitting another low for this year. The index plummeted 1,086.93 points, or 4.13 per cent, to 25,210.91 after losing 192.63 points on Tuesday.

It was the index's ninth largest decline in terms of points but still represented an improvement on mid-afternoon when it reached 24,876.32, the first time the Nikkei had dropped below the 25,000 level since February 24, 1988.

Philip Gordon-Lenox, a fund manager at Nippon Credit Bank, said: "I think the Nikkei is going to go down further. Most institutions are in no position to buy right now."

Another broker said: "I think it is fairly safe to assume that, with the market reaching these levels, some foreign houses are going to have to consider cutbacks. Their budgets are based on a Nikkei in the high 30,000s."

The index started falling from the opening as futures arbitrageurs sold cash stocks to buy futures contracts that were trading cheaply.

Mike Mortuza, an associate strategist at Shearson Lehman Asst Inc, said: "Support was seen at 27,000, and 22,000 is the next clear support line." Volume was 360 million shares, against 280 million on Tuesday. (Reuters)

WALL STREET

New York
Wall Street shares were strong in early trading, taking a cue from a firm American bond market. The Middle East, which seemed to be calm, remained the focus of

investors. However, the Dow Jones industrial average later fell by 0.99 of a point to 2,601.73. Advancing issues led declining shares by a margin of seven to three.

(Reuters)

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The Times continues its countdown to the opening of the football season

World Cup adds fuel to a boom

By PETER BALL

IN THE aftermath of England's World Cup success, English football is not so much quietly confident as buzzing with anticipation as it prepares for the start of the new season on Saturday.

The League game is very buoyant at the present time. Andy Williamson, the Football League's assistant secretary, said: "It has been stimulated by England's showing in the World Cup, but it was already very much on an upward trend, which started four years ago.

"Hopefully, that success in Italy, along with other things, such as the return to Europe, should stimulate interest at the top of the first division, giving added incentive there. The changes in the play-offs because of the switch back to a 22-club first division in 1991-2 should provide added interest lower down, so we should be going into the season in a very optimistic frame of mind."

Five years ago, in the wake of Hyslop, with attendances on a downward curve and an unsympathetic government, a demanding action, such an attitude would have been inconceivable. Football's problems looked intractable, and the prophets of doom hovered, offering their patent medicines - breakaway super leagues, regionalised, part-time third and fourth divisions, no third or fourth divisions, etc - as the only cures for the sick game.

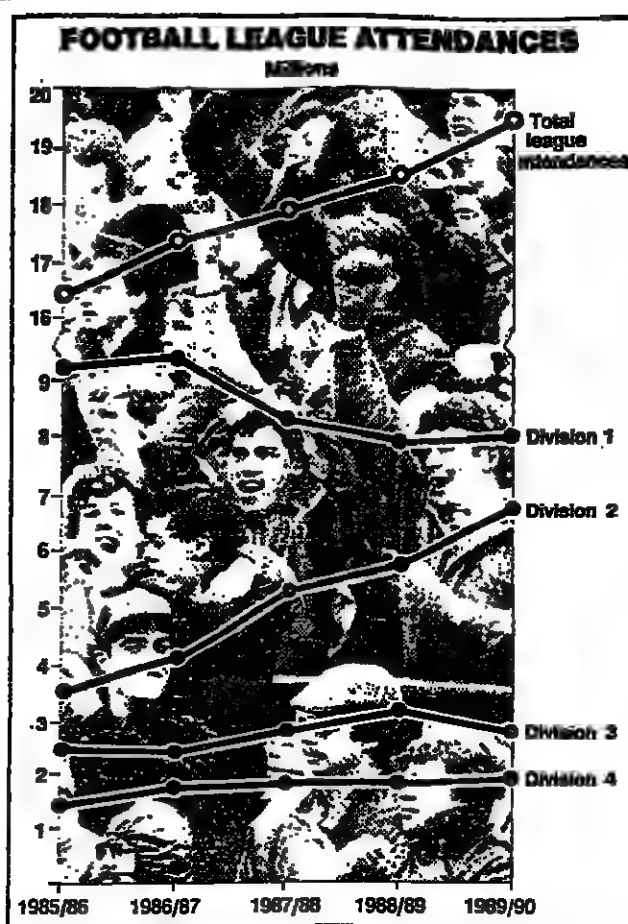
But from the nadir of 1985-6, when gates reached a post-war low of 16,498,86, the improvement has been consistent. The hated and feared government identity card scheme has been seen

off-popular, and press, sentiment has swung back football's way; sponsorship and television money has begun to pour in in unprecedented amounts, and attendances have continued to rise, in spite of (because of?) the reduction in the size of the first division, which gave a projected loss of approximately 700,000 customers over a season.

Last year's aggregate reached 19,466,826, almost one million up on the previous year's total, and officials confidently expect it to pass the 20 million mark in the coming season for the first time since 1981-2. Another rise would make it the first time in the competition's history that the aggregate attendance has shown an increase for five consecutive years. And that is not all, because whatever one thinks about the return to a 22-club first division, or its long-term effect, in the short term that alone should guarantee another increase the following season.

Meanwhile, the old BBC and ITV cartel having been broken, the League will receive more than £17 million in television fees this season, while sponsorship money to the League and the 92 clubs should exceed last year's total of £25 million. And this was before the World Cup success, and the return to Europe, added an extra gloss on the product. That it has done so cannot be doubted. Last week, more than 20,000 turned up at Tynecast to see Heart of Midlothian play Tottenham, a crowd Rangers or Hibernian may struggle to draw on their visits.

How is football going to



The increase in the number of second division clubs and decrease in those in the first division is reflected in the attendance figures from 1986 to 1989

exploit this opportunity? At the very least, one would think a quick advertising campaign to be run as appropriate on television on Friday evenings, starring "Gazza", David Platt, Des Walker?

Nothing so brash, at least for the moment, although it may happen later. The League is "looking at the logistics and cost of a television advertising campaign," Arthur Sandford,

the chief executive, said, "but it would be picked up a little later in the season." Presumably, although Sandford did not say so, when the first flush of enthusiasm begins to wane.

Other long-term marketing is taking place. The abortive government membership scheme at least suggested the value and possibility of identifying the customers, and a League-backed scheme will

soon offer database facilities for the third and fourth division clubs, while bigger clubs, like Arsenal, are also eagerly investigating that area.

With a lively sense of merchandising, Arsenal have opened a massive sports retail store near their stadium offering a wide range of sports goods. But while all sections of the game are concerned that the product should retain its attractiveness on the field, most insist that "steady as she goes" rather than rash adventurism is the right approach.

"The World Cup has given us a stage," Gordon Taylor, the chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, said. "A lot of things which have been crystallised by the World Cup, but there is a lot to do. What we have to do now is stress quality rather than quantity; quality of fixtures and performances, quality of stadiums, and indeed quality of administration - by which I mean taking a long-term view rather than a short-term one."

"If the response to the World Cup is just going to be spin-offs like selling Gazza T-shirts and organising even more domestic competitions it would be a terrible mistake. After the success of the World Cup, when our players had shown they were capable of matching the best for skill, for the League to then add more than ten per cent extra matches by going back to a 22-club first division is a backward step as it is."

"But the main priority must still be a proper response to the tragedies of Hillsborough and Hyslop, to expend the effort, time and money to ensure that we have

stadiums which offer comfort and safety."

Taylor's views are widely echoed. Williamson, Sandford, and David Dein, the vice-chairman of Arsenal, those "robust" opponents of the move back to 22 clubs who have spent £2 million in the summer on stadium improvements, all insist that the Taylor report and the move to all-seater stadiums is the first priority.

"Next season will see ground development on the agenda of just about every board in the League," Sandford said.

"The only way the game will continue to drive forward," Dein said, "is when we have facilities which are equal to the cinema and theatre, and are genuinely comfortable, welcoming places of entertainment."

Taylor and Dein also stressed the importance of using clubs' facilities for the community, both for marketing and to develop the grassroots of the game. With rare imagination, Arsenal are pursuing family involvement from a new angle, hoping that their 12 women's teams will result in women bringing the

game ever had with all the games it shows, two hours at prime time," Dein said. "They are throwing money at us, and they have a responsibility to market it also. They do a lot now, but they could do more with midweek and Friday night magazine programmes. It has a vital role to play in keeping the interest bubbling."

ATHLETICS

Faultless timing from Black in run-up to Split

By DAVID POWELL

ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

ROGER Black has not always given the impression that athletics is his life. He once declined a Hampshire Schools vest to sing in *The Mikado*. Given the pick of Gilbert and Sullivan now, he would probably choose *Patience*.

"I was part of the school production and then I got selected to run in the English Schools," Black said. "The two clashed and I had to make a decision. Athletics didn't mean as much to me in those days."

Now, when Japan comes to mind, he thinks not of Nanki-Poo, but of next year's world championships in Tokyo. In the meantime he has been reminding the profession of world class 400-metre runners from the United States that they should have more than the odd Cuban, Australian or Kenyan to worry about in 1991.

"I have not run the perfect race yet and I might not do that this year," Black said. "I am looking forward to the next two years." Not a perfect race, but four in rapid succession around 45.00 seconds, which is impressive consistency.

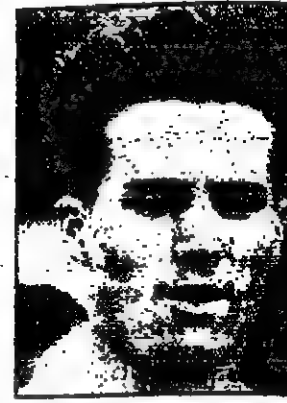
He has run a good one, too, to the starting line for the European championships in Split next week. With impeccable timing, Black has reached his best form since injury three years ago threatened to close the stage door on him. Patience is being rewarded. In avoiding temptation to rush his comeback, he should be successful in his defence of his European title.

How easy it would have been, after running 46.2 in Jersey last September, to have tried in January to keep hold of his Commonwealth title, which, like his European one, was won four years earlier. Instead, his caution confined him to the relay.

"Four races in two days would have been too much for me," he said. Black knew, too, that a European champion has more commercial clout than a Commonwealth one.

"Athletics is a business," he acknowledged. Thankfully, though, it was more a case of "Gone to Lunch" than "Closing Down". His complimentary Mercedes had been withdrawn and his decision in 1985 to quit medical school, after one term, to make a career out of athletics began to turn sour. He was no longer a doctor in waiting, but a patient. "There have been many times I have feared for my career," he said.

But the medics got it right, eventually. A screw was inserted in his right foot to pin a



Black: patience rewarded

stress fracture and, after being on crutches for six months, he worked his way back, gradually. As recently as six months ago, almost a year on from resuming light training, he was able to work out only every other day. Not until June was he back in full training. "I still get discomfort after most sessions," he said.

By the age of 20, Black had a collection of six significant gold medals: individual European junior and senior, Commonwealth and one from each of the relays at those championships. "There was no way I could combine medical school and training, so after much deliberation, I decided I would go for athletics because not many people have that opportunity. I didn't want to look back and say: 'If only, if only.'"

His taste for running - "athletics was something I did on sports days at school" - was developed when, failing to get the grades he needed for a place at St Bartholomew's Medical School, he had time on his hands. "I had to upgrade one subject, which I did in a couple of months and had the rest of the year off."

Now, at 24, Black is "having to relearn the event." A personal best 20.60sec for 200 metres at the AAA's championships at the beginning of the month set him up for four one-kilometre races in 11 days. In the last three, at Brussels, Zurich and Gateshead, he set the three fastest times by a European this year, but sees room for improvement.

"In Mainz [the first of the four in which he recorded 45.41] I went off too quickly; in Brussels I went off too early and ran a fast time [44.91]; in Zurich [45.05] I went off too quickly again, which I was annoyed about because I got carried away with the atmosphere; in Gateshead [45.13] I went off comfortably and ran a fast time by doing that." He would have expected to run a good deal faster in Zurich, the main grand prix meeting of the year, than in chilly Gateshead.

RUGBY UNION

Ella's glorious farewell

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Mark Ella, the former Australian captain, ended his playing career yesterday with a glorious try for his club, Randwick, to seal a 20-3 victory over the touring English club champions, Bath.

Ella's moment of glory brought a dour and bad-tempered game to life for almost 10,000 spectators who packed into the club's tiny beach-front ground to bid farewell to the man most rated as the finest player Australia has produced.

The stand-off half, aged 31, has retired before, spending four years out of the game until he returned to club rugby last year. But he insists his playing days are now over.

"This is it. I'm not interested in playing any more," he said. Ella and his family head today for Italy where he will coach the Amatori club in Milan.

Ella had few chances to shine but five minutes from the end

his renowned handling abilities enabled him to pick up an awkwardly bouncing loose ball on his own 22-metre line and sweep it out to the wing. The English players were wrong-footed and as Randwick surged forward, a series of looping overhead passes found Ella booming in on the post.

Ella, the first Aborigine to play for Australia, has the unique record of scoring a try in each of the Wallabies' games against England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales on the grand slam tour of 1984.

He played in 25 internationals and, although the three never played together for the national team, his brothers, Glen and Gary, also won Australian caps while playing for Randwick.

Glen now plays for another Sydney club, Manly, and injury has forced Gary into retirement.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

CRICKET

Third ODI Test
11.30, 100 overs minimum
THE OVAL: England v India

Tour match
11.00, 104 overs minimum
ELLIS VILLAS: Glamorgan v Sri Lanka

British Vale Assurance
championship
11.00, 110 overs minimum
DERBY: Derbyshire v Essex

SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v Leicestershire
LEICESTERSHIRE: Leicestershire v Kent

NORTHAMPTON: Northamptonshire v Gloucestershire
HANTS: Hants v Somerset

WORCESTER: Worcestershire v Warwickshire
HEDDINGLEY: Yorkshire v Middlesex

RAPID CRICKETLINE SECOND
DIVISION
CHAMPIONSHIP
11.00, 100 overs minimum
Yorkshire: Yorkshire v Derbyshire

CHESHIRE: Cheshire v Lancashire
Warwickshire: Warwickshire v Northamptonshire

Gloucestershire: Gloucestershire v Somerset
Sussex: Sussex v Kent

Worcestershire: Worcestershire v Warwickshire
Heddingley: Yorkshire v Middlesex

Other sport
BOWLS: Walsley national championship (Walsley)
GYMNASIUM: Space circuit race (Hemel Hempstead)

EQUESTRIANISM: 5th. Cut Derby (Hemel Hempstead)
GOLF: Ram Classic (Barnstaple) women's

British open senior strokeplay championship (Barnstaple) men's international (Southampton)

SWIMMING: (7.30) National League (Leamington) men's 100m freestyle (Leamington)

SWIMMING: (7.30) National League (Leamington) women's 100m freestyle (Leamington)

SWIMMING: (7.30) National League (Leamington) men's 100m freestyle (Leamington)

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SWIMMING: (7.30) National League (Leamington) men's 100m freestyle (Leamington)

Newcastle illustrate peril of selling assets

PAUL Gascoigne, Chris Waddle, and Peter Beardsley received an ironic cheer at St James' Park when they took their seats in the new Milburn Stand for last season's second division play-off semi-final with Sunderland.

Newcastle United lost and stayed down - a price often paid by clubs who trade in their best players for a handsome new stand. Such a sell-off or not-to-sell quandary is bound to be experienced by several second division clubs this season as the need to meet the requirements of Lord Justice Taylor, and ensure that their grounds are all-seated by 1994, becomes increasingly pressing.

Even if clubs intend to retain their best assets, talented players will want to play in the first division sooner rather than later. Earl Barrett, of Oldham Athletic, Stuart Slater, of West Ham United, Alan McLaughlin, of Swindon Town, and Steve Bull, of Wolverhampton Wanderers, are all outstanding individuals who will inevitably prove the source of transfer speculation this season.

For the sake of the supporters, it is to be hoped that they stay put. A 24-club division is dominated by a heavy fixture programme in which injuries and tiredness all too often precipitate a compromise in playing standards, typically manifested by the spectacularly unimpressive teams. West Ham - and it could be Stuart Slater's year - Sheffield Wednesday, Swindon, Middlesbrough, Port Vale, and ourselves are all attractive sides, and I think this season will see more football.

The second division promises a fascinating mix of styles but, as LOUISE TAYLOR reports, playing ambitions must be tailored to the demand by the Taylor Report to make grounds all-seated by 1994

something that lingers in the spectator's memory rather than being discarded before the Saturday tea dishes are washed up. The predilection of teams such as Wolverhampton Wanderers for playing a basic version of the long ball, involving passing to areas of the pitch as opposed to specific men, can produce not only points but also yawns.

To be fair, accurate, early, long balls played to wingers - as in the halcyon days at Watford, when John Barnes and Nigel Colman flourished under Graham Taylor - can prove exhilarating, high-scoring fare. In any case, the second division cannot be regarded as the Mecca of the percentage game. There are sufficient teams with the three or four very good "core" players in key positions like Kerslake, McLaughlin, and White at Swindon - to enable teams to experiment with alternative formations.

David Platt, the manager of Leicester City, said: "This year there are a number of talented players. West Ham - and it could be Stuart Slater's year - Sheffield Wednesday, Swindon, Middlesbrough, Port Vale, and ourselves are all attractive sides, and I think this season will see more football."

field Wednesday, Swindon, Middlesbrough, Port Vale, and ourselves are all attractive sides, and I think this season will see more football.

"We all favour slower build-ups, and with managers like Ron Atkinson, Joe Royle, and Billy Bonds around, play is bound to be more calculating. We should see less of the sort of football which was so criticised last season."

"But the long ball won promotion for Dave Bassett at Sheffield United last season, and Wolverhampton Wanderers could do well with a similar system this time. The World Cup is bound to influence playing styles, however."

"I think that in its aftermath we will see about eight second division teams playing two markers and a spare man at the back, with full backs pushing forward - a sweeper system. But whether you play a five-man midfield, a flat back four sweeper, move the ball around in diamond patterns like Swindon, or specialise in counter-attacking, all systems have their drawbacks - which is what makes life interesting."

"So interesting that I think as many as 15 second division teams have cause for genuine optimism about promotion, while around six will probably start out contemplating relegation."

"Of the leading 15 or so, there are several teams with a recent

first division tradition, and the support that goes with it."

"Newcastle United, who finished third in May, and Swindon, who were promoted via the play-offs but then demoted by the League, will be strong contenders. At Newcastle, Jim Smith has one or two players who are getting on a bit, and he knows it is this team's last chance."

"Nobody knows how the problems surrounding Swindon will affect them. They were lucky with injuries last year, but Ossie did a superb job in giving them confidence, and letting them enjoy themselves on and off the field."

"After the disciplinary approach of Lou Macari the players loved being allowed to express themselves on the pitch, have a better after the game. Ossie is very relaxed, and keeps telling them that even Maradona is useless without confidence. The result was that they grew enormously in confidence, but whether this approach will produce sustained success remains to be seen."

"Millwall and Charlton, the teams who went down along with Sheffield Wednesday are also likely to be involved at the top end of the table, and even teams like West Bromwich Albion, Portsmouth, Watford, and Barnsley who did not so well last time could be vastly improved this time."

providing Yates, their outstanding central defender, remains at Meadow Lane.

Lund, a forward once bracketed with the club's dalliance with relegation, but should do rather better under the new management of Colin Todd this season. His punting principles mean Middlesbrough are likely to be one of the pretest teams, but - despite Steven's goals - they could lack the muscle to attack.

Brennan and Davenport have gone, but while Hendrie and Wark, who is likely to start in the midfield, will fit the Boro playing pattern, they are unlikely to make any more of an impact than their predecessors.

TRANSFERS: In: J. Hendrie (Leeds, £500,000); J. Wark (Ipswich, £200,000); M. McGuffee (Sheff Wed, £170,000); J. McLaughlin (Watford, £200,000).

Hull City

Recovered well after floundering during the early part of last season. Fortified defensively by the acquisition of M. McGuffee (Sheff Wed, £170,000), and could miss Kelly, the goalkeeper who has left for Hibernian, as the last line of defence. Heavily reliant on Payton's defensive attributes last season; would betide City if he falls prey to injury or a transfer.

TRANSFERS: In: R. Williams (Northampton, £100,000); J. Ferguson (Blackburn, £200,000); D. Malt (Blackburn, £150,000); G. Mudd (Scarborough, £50,000).

Ipswich Town

A fresh managerial challenge for John Lyall. Players of the calibre of Lowe, Kynyma, and Doozelle make Ipswich potential promotion material, but the squad lacks depth and they tend to become poached.

TRANSFERS: In: P. Parfies (West Ham, £100,000); M. Mitchell (Ipswich, £200,000); C. Walker (Ipswich, £200,000); D. K. Duffin (Watford, £275,000); K. Bremner (Preston, £100,000); J. Kelly (Oxford, £200,000).

Bristol City

Joe Jordan, who turned down an offer to manage Aston Villa, clearly has grounds for staying put at Ashton Gate. Providing Bob Taylor can keep scoring with the frequency of his third division days, and Kelly, signed from Hull, settles in goal, a place in the top half of the table is a realistic prospect.

TRANSFERS: In: W. Allison (Watford, £100,000); M. Gavan (City, £100,000); M. Aldwood (Bradford, £175,000); A. May (Huddersfield, £50,000); L. Donova (Bristol City, £25,000); M. Jones (Crystal Palace, £100,000); R. Turner (Plymouth, £150,000); M. Gavan (Watford, £100,000).

Bristol Rovers

Gerry Francis is an able young manager, but, perhaps significantly, he has only agreed to a one-year contract. Did well to earn



Stuart Slater: could set alight the second division

possession players with the ability to surprise, hampered by incapacity for the erratic Whitehams, their former army centre forward, lacks a similar pedigree, but Portsmouth will lean heavily on his partnership with Clarke.

TRANSFERS: In: C. Clarke (Queens Park Rangers, £450,000); Out: K. Ball (Sunderland, £250,000); T. Connor (Swansea, £120,000).

Port Vale

Promotion may be beyond them, but with Ray Walker adorning the midfield, aided by Eadie, and the mucky Beckford in attack, Vale possess sufficient ability - though they are not afraid to be physical - to extend their tenure as the leading team in the Pottery.

TRANSFERS: In: D. Swan (Sheff Wed, £115,000); Out: None.

Sheffield Wednesday

Radiate quality, and players of the ilk of Sheridan should ensure that Wednesday return to the first division in some style. May need to compromise purist principles in favour of more chit-chatting approach. Will miss Atkinson, sold to Real Sociedad, in attack, but Williams, signed from Charlton, promises to be an exciting replacement.

TRANSFERS: In: P. Williams (Charlton, £200,000); D. Wilson (Ipswich, £200,000); G. Gregory (Hull, £100,000); D. Atkinson (Real Sociedad, £1,700,000).

Swindon Town

Outstanding at Wembley when they beat Sunderland in this season's play-off final before being demoted by League in wake of financial irregularities. Kerslake, McLaughlin, and White should prove key players in defence, midfield, and attack respectively. Will be intriguing to see how team spirit responds to financial scandal hanging over the club.

TRANSFERS: In: None. Out: M. Jones (Cardiff, £100,000); J. Cornwell (Sunderland, £25,000).

Watford

In Jack Potchey, Colin Lee, and David Hay, Watford boast new chairman, new manager, and new coach. Will miss Cotton, the goalkeeper sold to Manchester City, who will be replaced by Ross (three first-team games in three seasons) in a radically re-shaped team. Potchey is an outstanding forward, but could have spent the money better in midfield.

TRANSFERS: In: M. Stowell (Exeter, £275,000); R. Hindmarsh (Derby, £225,000); G. Brown (Reading, £100,000); N. Vaughan (Hemel, £100,000).

Wolverhampton Wanderers

Tendency to play long balls into areas of the field as opposed to specific men, means they are unlikely to thrill. But similar philosophy paid dividends for Sheffield United last season, and while Bull and Mutch remain paired in attack, a play-off place remains a strong possibility.

TRANSFERS: In: None. Out: P. Parfies (Ipswich, £100,000); A. Devonshire (Hull, £100,000).

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South African cricket sees light at the end of the tunnel as the SACU and SACB agree to meet after 14 years of mutual distrust

Durban peace talks to up the pace of unification process

By RICHARD STREETON

A SIGNIFICANT breakthrough in moves to unify South African cricket under one controlling body comes next month when the South African Cricket Union (SACU) and the non-white South African Cricket Board (SACB) are to hold preliminary talks about merging.

It will be the first constructive contact the two organisations have had in 14 years of inimical co-existence, and has the unanimous support of both sets of officials and the African National Congress.

Every aspect of South African cricket's future will be discussed when the two parties get together in Durban on September 8 for a meeting which could have crucial implications for international cricket.

For the English game, one offshoot is that Mike Gatting and the other members of last winter's unauthorised English team will not be returning to the republic in any capacity.

Gatting and his players, who signed two-year contracts committing them to the SACU, expected to hear later this month whether they had to return to South Africa to coach this winter. The SACU

has always said they would honour the contracts and that the players would be paid.

Although any question of a second tour was ruled out long ago, it was on the cards the players might have had to help coach in the black townships.

Once again, however, what was always an ill-advised venture has been overtaken by the speed with which political events have happened in South Africa. The names of Gatting and his players remain widely synonymous with civil unrest and racial tension.

Only recently, the SACU, conscious of the new climate as a start is made to dismantle apartheid, has firmly dissuaded several provinces from approaching members of Gatting's team to play for them.

The new wave of inter-tribal unrest has made it even more certain that it would be injudicious for the English players to return, and the SACU will not want to risk any disruption of the delicate negotiations with the SACB.

Dr Ali Bacher, the managing director of the SACU, declined to make any comment about Gatting and his

players yesterday, but confirmed that the meeting with the SACB had been arranged.

Bacher's personal view was that the negotiations would succeed and that it was possible the country's cricket administration could be restructured by the end of December, which is midway through the South African summer.

Asked if he would keep the International Cricket Council informed of developments, he said: "At the moment, South Africa's international future is the furthest thing from our minds. What is more important than anything else is to get our cricket in this country properly organised, with equal opportunities for all and with everybody sharing the sponsorships and facilities available."

This was the original aim when the SACU came into being in 1976-77 to govern cricket of all races but, within two months, the SACB was formed as a breakaway group, mainly for Indians and coloureds. Now, the mood in South Africa for unification in all sports could see cricket administrators fulfil their ambition.



Talking tactics: Bedi, the India manager, makes his point to Azharuddin, the captain

Tendulkar's feats bring balm to troubled country

By VIJAY RANA

INDIA may not have the connoisseurs of classical cricket, but it has the masses who passionately follow the progress of their cricketers. Their little hero, Sachin Tendulkar, has helped to lessen the effects of their somber concerns. A few weeks ago, their minority government was about to collapse and now, as a result of the Gulf Crisis, their economy is on the brink of ruin.

Amid these agonies, Tendulkar saved India from the torments of defeat in the mould of Chandrasekhar, an evergreen batsman who dispensed a place. Through form would favour Wason, history is on the side of Tendulkar. At the Oval in 1971, Chandrasekhar single-handedly gave India her first Test victory in England.

Despite some doubtful decisions at Old Trafford, the umpires, Holder and Hampshire, survived on the reputation they earned as neutral umpires for India's tour to Pakistan. The Indian officials made no protest, not even for the tactical purpose of putting pressure on this Test.

Tendulkar's world has, however, changed completely. From an impetuous "boy wonder", he has become, in the words of Graham Gooch, "an old pro": a cool and calculating batsman who could endlessly wait for a loose delivery.

India's problems begin with the form of Sidhu, the opener. Having scored centuries against the counties, he has failed miserably in both Tests, scoring 44 runs in four innings. Waiting in the wings is left-handed opener, Raman, who sent a forceful reminder to the selectors by scoring, at the Oval, a stylish 127 against Surrey.

As for the bowling, Kapil Dev seems to have lost heart and Prabhakar is not a Test-class bowler. Anil Wason, who strengthened his claim by taking six Glamorgan wickets, and Anil Kumble, a fastish leg break bowler in the mould of Chandrasekhar, are nevertheless the only bowlers disputing a place. Through form would favour Wason, history is on the side of Tendulkar. At the Oval in 1971, Chandrasekhar single-handedly gave India her first Test victory in England.

And why should there be any fuss about umpiring when all of us are watching such a positive series?

● Vijay Rana is a sports broadcaster and senior producer in BBC World Service in Hindi.

Return to a happy hunting ground

By SIMON WILDE

THE Oval, where the third and final Test match starts today, will always hold a special place in India's history. It was there, 19 years ago tomorrow, that they won a Test, and a series, in England for the first time.

The only member of the present tour party to have played in the 1971 match was Bala Subramanian, the manager, who was twice hit for six into the pavilion by Jameson. The match-winner was the wicket-spinner, Chandrasekhar, who took six for 38 as England were dismissed for 101 in the second innings. India batted for more than 100 overs for 173 to win.

On their next visit to the ground in 1979, India, who had been set 438, would have won again had not Brarley, the England captain, ruthlessly slowed down the over-rate and then broken Gavaskar's con-

stantly placed and Dublin last month when he again won the grand prize.

David Broome, who dislikes the Derby course, could nevertheless prove one of Skelton's main rivals for the £30,000 first prize. Broome has not competed in the Derby for four years but decided to "give it a go". He said: "I'm not a great fan of the Hickstead course, it's too steep for what it's meant to be. It's also a long way out."

Despite his misgivings, both his horses have already proved themselves over other Derby courses. Countryman won the Millstreet Derby in Ireland last month. Lannegan also won Millstreet two years ago and the Welsh Derby last year.

Michael Whitaker has two powerful contenders in Henderson Monsana and Henderson Tees Hanover. The latter, who was fifth in the Rotterdam grand prize last week, was equal fourth last year. Other British entries include Robert and Harvey Smith, who is seeking an elusive fifth win, and Joe Turi and Vital who were equal fourth last year and equal second the previous year. Philip Heffer, third last year with Viewpoint, will only compete in the second classes.

John Ledingham, of Ireland, the winner in 1984, heads a foreign entry which is depleted because many of the top horses are still resting after Stockholm. The Olympic three-day event champion, Mark Todd, from New Zealand, is also hoping to make his first attempt at the Derby, on Tomorrow's trial. A maximum of 38 can start on Sunday.

EQUESTRIANISM

Skelton's chances given timely boost

By JENNY MACARTHUR

NICK Skelton, who attempts a fourth successive win in the Silk Cut Derby at Hickstead on Sunday, and the third on Alan Paul Apollo, has boosted his chances by borrowing John Whitaker's proven Derby horse, Hopscotch, as his second string.

Although the 15-year-old Apollo, Hickstead's answer to Red Ram, will be his best hope — he won in 1988 and 1989 and was second in 1984 — Hopscotch, a runner-up in 1988, should prove a reliable second.

Whitaker, who is competing in Luxembourg this weekend, decided to miss Hickstead this year because he does not have two horses for the Derby. In recognition of the Derby's thirtieth anniversary, the skills required to complete the course successfully, the sponsors are offering record prize money this year of £30,000, making it the richest show jumping event in Europe. It is also the toughest.

The 16-fence course, which includes the notorious Devil's Dyke and Hickstead Bank with its 10ft 6in drop, has produced just 27 clear rounds.

A £5,000 bonus if the winner completes two clear rounds is also on offer. So far, the bonus has not been claimed. Skelton won last year after collecting four faults in a three horse jump-off. In 1988 he won outright with the only clear round.

The Dutch-bred Apollo, owned by Linda Jones, has been specifically programmed for the Derby and has had just four outings this year. Rome in May won two classes, Hickstead in June where he won the £20,000 grand prize. Aschett later that month where he was

consistently placed and Dublin last month when he again won the grand prize.

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A split second decides it for Irish club

By a CORRESPONDENT

THE Pedigree Cham pony club show jumping championships reached an exciting climax at Weston Park, near Shifnal, yesterday. A total of 29 teams of four riders from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland participated.

The Warrington, from Kilkenny, in Northern Ireland, on their first sortie to the championships, jumped clear throughout. They were made up of the Mooney family: Marie, aged 16, Ellie, 12, and Eddie, 14, with Brian Sheehan, 14, completing the squad.

The Furness and District, from Yorkshire, and the Garth South A team, from Berkshire, both achieved a total of six faults, with the Warrington clearing a jump-off. Against the clock, over a shortened course, all three teams finished on four faults, with the Warrington winning on time by 0.6-sec.

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SPORTS LETTERS

Bisham scheme unwelcome

From Mr Eric Brooks
Sir, You report (August 21) yet another shameful proposal for further development, "marketing" and commercial use of Bisham Abbey.

We have suffered too much already in the damage to the Abbey, which, with the other buildings nearby, is one of our finest listed buildings. It represents more than 500 years of English history, the Knights Templar, Crusaders and every ruler since Edward I have owned or visited it.

Elizabeth I stayed there in 1592, and Queen Elizabeth II knows it well. Any further commercial use should not be permitted within sight of this beautiful place; the "pursuit of excellence" in sport has gone far enough.

I invite others to join with me to prevent the despoiling for profit of this great heritage. I am, yours truly, ERIC A. S. BROOKS, 116b Grenfell Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire.

From Mr R. A. Lightbown
Sir, It was with interest that I read John Goodbody's article (August 21), "Bisham enters an enterprising era". The article quotes Mr Hucklestep, the new

general manager of Bisham, as saying: "How about a slogan in the area enticing people into Bisham: 'Train where the Olympics train'."

I can accept that the nine-hole golf course, which can be more accurately described as a pitch and putt course, may be of some attraction, as may be the squash and tennis facilities. Local clubs are more than happy to use the excellent artificial pitches for hockey and football.

However, for other locals and especially local sportsmen the facilities on offer are distinctly mediocre. The fitness suite at Bisham, which is primarily a weights room with various other cardio-vascular apparatus, is by no means what serious-minded sportsmen would describe as adequate.

The Marlow area is heavily populated with local sports clubs, but the facilities at Bisham do not make it an attractive venue at which to train. Before it can compete it must match and then better the facilities on offer at other local sites.

Yours faithfully, ANDREW LIGHTBOWN, Little Westons, West Street, Marlow, Buckinghamshire.

Poor treatment

From Mr Colin Kitching
Sir, Admitting my local interest, I maintain that John Morris was poorly treated during the first two Tests against India.

In both matches it was important for the selectors to find out whether Morris could play a substantial innings at the highest level. In the Lord's Test his only opportunity came in the second innings. England had runs galore in the bank; the class of Gower, Lamb and Smith was well known; surely Morris would be given his chance and

sent in at three, four or five. But no — the official order stood.

As for the Old Trafford Test, Morris batted at six in the first innings when he could reasonably have gone in at, say, four, with 292 for two on the board. Come the second innings I felt sure that, with a lead of 87, Gooch would put Morris in early. Again the same lack of imagination: the wretched Morris once more batted six, by which time quick runs were needed. Why this extraordinary reluctance to see what the man is made of?

Yours faithfully, CLIN KITCHING, 34 Chestnut Way, Repton, Derbyshire.

Better use of golf courses

From Mr David Gullick
Sir, As I am only a viewer, not a player of golf, I have been so far inhibited in joining the correspondence about the shortage of, and need for, more courses. But I contain myself no longer.

On fairly frequent rail journeys to Kings Cross, travelling midday (being retired), I observe much of the extent of the course at Potters Bar, alongside the track. During this splendid summer I have been puzzled that, as often as not, there is not a player in sight. When there are players to be seen, it may be no more than one or two ladies' foursomes. What I report is, I am sure, not exclusive to Potters Bar.

Surely there are thereabouts sufficient senior citizens (or during holidays, youngsters) who would be prepared to accept playing rights during limited hours. If the cost were not prohibitive, and surely it would be in the interests of the club to fix such charge at a non-prohibitive level. As it is, a non-productive facility is entirely non-productive for most hours of the week.

Yours faithfully, DAVID GULLICK, 1 Heathrow Road, Welwyn, Hertfordshire.

From Mr M. Y. Watson
Sir, "He's left himself a long putt," said the golf commentator, "but he sank one just as long as a few holes back. So I wouldn't be surprised if he didn't hole this one."

We all understood him, though a moment's thought will show that what he said was the exact opposite of what he meant.

Funny language, English. Yours faithfully, M. Y. WATSON, 3 Xaxon Way, Saffron Walden, Essex.

On the right track

From Mr Adrian Metcalfe
Sir, I have good news for David Turner (Sports Letters, August 16).

Not only does Eurosport cover every major (and most minor) athletics event and at greater length live than other channels but we follow the action, not the personalities. Yours sincerely, ADRIAN METCALFE, Head of Programmes, Eurosport, 6 Centaurs Business Park, Grant Way, Isleworth, Middlesex.

Flow interrupted

From Mr R. G. Morgan
Sir, Peter Barnard ("Deep rumblings in the basement", August 7) complains of television switches between cricket and Aspot at crucial moments.

That is had enough but worse is BBC's obsession with hourly news bulletins during the week regardless of the state of the golf, the cricket or the racing. Not only does it interrupt the flow of the sport it is so deadly boring having the same news and weather rained down one's throat every hour.

Who are the viewers so desperate for news and why, if so keen, do they not use radios? Yours faithfully, R. G. MORGAN, 73 Brangwyn Drive, Brighton, Sussex.

Proper lessons for schoolboys

From the headmaster of Northamptonshire Grammar School
Sir, As the 17-year-old Tendulkar approached his maiden Test century, the television commentators were surely right to draw to the attention of watching schoolboy cricketers the many instances of his exemplary play skill. It is however unfortunate that those same schoolboys should also have received lessons from them in some of the less seemingly aspects of contemporary professional sport.

Time-wasting may well be a common means of avoiding defeat, but need the opinion that the batsmen should do "a little bit of gardening" to be advocated in such a matter of fact way, and when a bowler has been "spoken to" for running on the wicket, is it right to suggest that in the closing overs he might again risk the umpire's displeasure, since at that late stage of the game the potential gain of a wicket or two

far outweighed the disadvantage of the bowler's suspension. The players, I was pleased to see, took neither course of action: so let's have more lessons for the schoolboys on how to beat the other team of players, and none on how to outwit the umpires.

Yours faithfully, MALCOLM TOZER, Headmaster, Northamptonshire Grammar School, Pitsford Hall, Pitsford, Northamptonshire.

From Mr S. C. Devani
Sir, Does not the law of the land prohibit the giving of an alcoholic drink as a prize or gift to an under-age person? Should Tendulkar have received a bottle of champagne, as man of the match in the Old Trafford Test?

S. C. DEVANI, 139 Camrose Avenue, Edgware, Middlesex.

Changing the days

From Mr Paul Hagan
Sir, Why don't the cricketing authorities play the five-day Tests from Monday to Saturday, with the rest day on Thursday, as most exciting last day — which seems crazy to me that on the last day of the week — which is as of now Tuesday — the ground is near enough empty. Don't they know that a lot of folk take their week's holiday to see the Test, and they're back at work on the last two days.

Yours sincerely, PAUL HAGAN, 27 Gomshall Gardens, Kenley, Surrey.

Hat-trick of lions

From Mr Jonathan Kinsop
Sir, Richard Worrall wrote (August 16) that the single rampant lion of the TCCB was worn on the breast and cap of the English players.

Last time I looked at an English Test player's cap there were three lions with a crown above them (the traditional emblem). The TCCB's lion features only on players' shirts.

Yours faithfully, JONATHAN KINSOP, 3 Clark Road, Edinburgh.

Good introduction

From Mr Frank E. Ong
Sir, I have during a long career in physical education been appreciative of the part games and competition can play in full development of the minds and bodies of our youth, and am convinced that tennis should play a much more prominent part in the activities on offer in our schools.

As the LTA registered tennis coach who started the short-tennis pilot scheme in Norfolk, I am well aware what a splendid introduction it is to the ball and racket skills eventually required to enjoy the major game. Many first and middle schools introduce the game, often at the age of five. For many, five to eight years will pass until they reach high schools where tennis court facilities are available or the individuals themselves have reached the stage in their physical development which will make the enjoyment of the major game possible.

I believe that the provision of the game of mid-tennis, especially in middle schools, would provide a natural progression (as in the case of most major sports) without the necessity of very advanced technical coaching. This provision could be made available as the normal netball court, which most middle schools have, could accommodate three of these courts.

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SPORT

Sponsors ensure that they make an impression



Latest score: an English Test match ground will submit to a new form of commercial intrusion today with the outfield at the Oval being marked with sponsors' logos for the final Cornhill Test between England and India. They measure eight metres by three and will be positioned roughly 30 yards behind the stumps at each end of the ground.

Change of pace for Malcolm

By ALAN LEE
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

IF ANYONE still believes nothing ever changes in the game of cricket, he should come to The Oval today and see an English Test match with a new bowler in the line-up, gaudy commercial logo on the grass in front of him, and the opposition quoted at \$-1 to upset Graham Gooch's model army.

On and off the field, this has been a year of staggering progress for England. The game is making money, even if some of the means raise an eyebrow or two, and the national team, nightmares of the recent past evidently forgotten, is actually making something of a habit of winning matches.

Today, in the final Cornhill Test of the season, they have the ideal showcase. The setting will be as nifty as the corner of south London can ever have provided, always assuming yesterday's frantic decorating of the towering

new stand is actually completed in time, and the pitch will be the first this summer to meet the basic requirements of Test cricket.

Last weekend's downpour has restored a hint of greenness to the arid Oval outfield but has had no great effect on the pitch. Harry Brind, the head groundsman, is confident that it will be dry and true, which gives it a head start on all too many, but also relatively quick and bouncy, news which Devon Malcolm has been waiting all summer.

Way back in May, during the season's first round of one day internationals, Malcolm bowled as fast and aggressive a spell as I have seen from an England bowler in years. According to John Wright, New Zealand's captain, who was on the receiving end, Malcolm that day was as hostile as anyone in the world.

It today's pitch is comparable, England start with an appreciable advantage. Malcolm can vent the frustrations of a man whose edge has been blunted by a sequence of dull,

slow pitches, on Indian batsmen whose recent relationships with genuine pace have been brief and acrimonious.

In the Caribbean last year India lost three consecutive Tests by margins of eight wickets, 217 runs and seven wickets, with largely the same batsmen they have here. To say they did not acquit themselves staunchly would be doing them a kindness and, if England's ship has been holed in similar storms more than once, it is now they who have the heavy artillery.

Malcolm has taken only five expensive wickets in the first two games of this series and has not looked at his happiest. Micky Stewart, the team manager, is confident that the problems have been resolved: "There were times at Lord's when he was struggling to find

his rhythm. We have worked on that, with the help of videos, and he is in a better frame of mind now. He obviously has an important part to play here, because he is much the quickest bowler in the match."

It seems possible that England will opt to play all four of their seam bowlers, giving a debut to Middlesex's Neil Williams and relying on the novice leg spin of Michael Atherton for variety. It is a debatable policy, but one to which the Indians are adding a little support by proposing to include a third seamer, Atul Wasson, instead of their second leg spinner, Anil Kumble.

Whatever England decide, it will be with nothing other than the current match in mind, which seems to scupper the notion that John Morris

might be promoted in the batting order so that the selectors can see him in more than a walk-on part before they have to choose the party to go to Australia.

Any mention of Australia yesterday was met by a classical straight bat from Stewart, who insisted: "The first and foremost thing is to win this Test match and this series. Australia will be looked at entirely separately because it will be a different sort of cricket. Nobody is on trial in this game."

Had he been within earshot, David Gower might have smiled whimsically at that remark, for although Stewart refused to be drawn on the issue, Gower is demonstrably on trial for his tour place. The strain of scrutiny on a talent glorious in its unpredictability was just beginning to tell last night.

No such problems affect Gooch, who now needs a further 90 runs in this match to overtake Don Bradman's record of 974 for an English Test summer, or Robin Smith,

currently averaging 297 in this series. It is not the making of runs which is likely to be England's main concern here.

One area on which they worked especially hard yesterday was the spacing and understanding of their slip fielders. Allan Lamb will continue at first slip despite having failed to move a muscle for two recent chances, but a slightly changed formation will be used. If Malcolm gets it right, there will be no scope for sloppiness in the slips; the match could depend upon it.

More than 5,000 tickets remain for the first day's play today but Friday is already sold out and only a few dozen tickets are still available for Saturday.

Australian influx

Fulham will be reinforced by the arrival of four Australian rugby league players next month. Tim Dwyer, Greg Manthey and Shaun Mohr, who are backs, and Mark Lee, a forward, will join Dave Cruickshank, the former South Sydney half back who was with Leeds last season.

Leeds facing expulsion if fans misbehave

By CLIVE WHITE

LEEDS United, newly promoted to the first division, face expulsion from the Football League and all Football Association competitions if measures outlined yesterday by the FA to curb the hooligan behaviour of some of their followers fail.

Leeds will be forced to play four consecutive home matches behind closed doors should their "supporters" be found guilty this season of a repetition of the kind of violence which caused havoc in Bournemouth on May 5 before and after a second division match.

The FA, announcing its findings at the completion of an inquiry into the rioting, warned that if that punishment was not enough to deter the hooligan element then the FA would apply the "ultimate sanction" - the unprecedented withdrawal of FA membership and by definition their right to play in the League as well as all FA competitions.

Following the Government's failure to implement a national membership card scheme, it will want to see evidence of football putting its house in order. But while the FA may believe that they have been seen to be doing just that in dealing with a club, who, ironically operate a membership card scheme, Bournemouth regarded their action as no more than "a slap on the wrist".

"Leeds have got off lightly and they know it," Jim Nolan, the Bournemouth chairman, said. "The town of Bournemouth was ransacked and looted for four days."

"Leeds spent £4m on players this summer and I would

have liked them to have put 10 per cent of that into a Bournemouth council fund so that it could have been distributed among those people who had property damaged by their fans or who lost business as a result of damage." There were nearly 150 arrests at the Bank holiday match, 50 injuries and £40,000 worth of damage.

Dorset police, however, at least appeared to be satisfied with the sanctions. Alan Rose, the assistant chief constable, said: "In football terms, they appear to be wide-ranging and could have serious consequences for Leeds United." West Yorkshire police described the decision as a suspended sentence.

Leslie Silver, the Leeds chairman, saw the FA's decision as a warning to "fans". He said: "We endorse that warning and are very pleased that the club was not criticised. But I don't think the threats are fair. We accept the principle of what the FA are saying but don't like the implications."

"I don't know what more we can do short of blocking off the M1 and I am concerned that some people may see this as an opportunity to cause trouble for Leeds and get the ground closed."

The FA's findings were accepted by the League, which was criticised by the FA for not heeding the warning of the police about staging the Bournemouth-Leeds game on a bank holiday weekend. This season's fixtures, which have avoided Bank holiday matches at seaside resorts, have been compiled in close liaison with the police.

Robson suffers another setback

By IAN ROSS

BRYAN Robson's misery at having to undergo a second operation on his troublesome left ankle was compounded yesterday with the news that he is likely to miss the opening three months of the new season.

The captain of Manchester United and England underwent corrective surgery on a damaged Achilles tendon in a London clinic on Tuesday but he had hoped to be in a position to resume playing within five weeks.

However, the specialist who operated on Robson has insisted that his ankle be immobilised in plaster for at least four weeks and Alex Ferguson, the United manager, is aware that a full recovery will not now be achieved until mid-November at the earliest.

This latest setback will serve to fuel speculation that Robson's England career is finally over.

The patience of Colin Harvey, the Everton manager, was finally rewarded yesterday when he completed the signing of Mike Milligan, the

highly-rated Oldham Athletic midfielder.

Milligan will undergo a statutory medical examination at Goodison Park this morning and if he is given a clean bill of health the £1-million transfer will be officially ratified at lunchtime.

Vandalism resulted in a flood at Highbury, the home of Arsenal, yesterday. Thousands of gallons of water were pumped away by firemen after the changing rooms and lower tier of the East Stand in Avenue Road were flooded.

While club officials assessed the extent of the damage, police began an investigation into the incident. It is believed that vandals climbed over a wall, broke into the stand, turned on a fire hydrant and left it running.

Steve Sutton, Nottingham Forest's unsung goalkeeper, has been told by Brian Clough he will not play for the club again unless he signs a new contract (Chris Moore writes). "I cannot afford to start the new season with a goalkeeper who is not under contract," the Forest manager said.

Essex aiming to maintain surge

By RICHARD STREETON

HOW THEY STAND

ESSEX, who have at least one game in hand over all their main rivals, meet Derbyshire at Derby today as they try to continue their remarkable late surge for the Britannia Assurance county championship and its £40,000 prize-money.

In the second week of July, Essex were third from the bottom of the table, but six wins in nine matches, including three in the last four, have left them unexpected favourites for a title they last won in 1986.

In Gooch's absence, with England, Pringle hopes to be able to return to lead Essex, following a back injury, against opponents whose morale could be low after the deduction of 25 points for

MIDDLESEX (played 18, 211 points). Today: v Yorkshire (at Headingley). Sept 7: v Nottinghamshire (Lord's). Sept 12: v Surrey (the Oval). Sept 18: v Sussex (Hove).
ESSEX (17, 209). Today: v Derbyshire (Derby). Aug 28: v Northamptonshire (Northampton). Sept 7: v Northamptonshire (Chesham). Sept 12: v Kent (Chatham). Sept 18: v Surrey (the Oval).
WARWICKSHIRE (18, 193). Today: v Worcestershire (Worcester). Sept 7: v Somerset (Edgbaston). Sept 12: v Glamorgan (Edgbaston). Sept 18: v Lancashire (Old Trafford).
HAMPSHIRE (18, 192). Today: v Surrey (Southampton). Aug 28: v Kent (Goumsouth). Sept 7: v Glamorgan (Pontypool). Sept 18: v Gloucestershire (Southampton).
LANCASHIRE (19, 187). Aug 28: v Surrey (Blackpool). Sept 12: v Nottinghamshire (The Bridge). Sept 18: v Warwickshire (Old Trafford).
"denotes three-day match; all others four-day."

providing an unsuitable pitch. Derbyshire are expected to include Bishop, the West Indian, in place of Kuiper, the South African. They will obviously have done their best to provide a more suitable surface but the problems on their square are long-standing ones and Essex will not mind that the odds must be on a definite result.

With the majority of the

They badly need to regain the momentum which comes with winning when they play Yorkshire at Headingley today, but will be handicapped by the absence of Fraser and Williams, who are on Test match duty for England against India at the Oval.

Warwickshire, the third-placed side, are away to Worcestershire, who expect the reappearance of Neale, their captain, after a thigh operation. Hampshire, who play Surrey, are still in contention in fourth place.

Lancashire, who are fifth, have played at least one more match than those ahead of them. Unless the weather intervenes, by disrupting their rivals yet sparing them, they look out of the race.

Today's teams at the Oval

ENGLAND (from): G A Gooch (captain), M A Atherton, A R C Fraser, D J Gower, E E Hemmings, A J Lamb, C G Lewis, D E Macleod, J E Morris, R C Russell, R A Smith, N F Williams.
INDIA (from): M Azharuddin (captain), N D

Hirwani, Kapil Dev, A Kumble, S V Manjrekar, K S More, M Prasadkar, V V Ramesh, R J Shastri, N S Sen, S R Tendulkar, D B Vengsarkar, A Wasson.
Umpires: N T Plews and D R Shepherd.

Yorkshire sever Bairstow links

By MARTIN SEARBY

DAVID Bairstow, the Yorkshire wicketkeeper, will not be offered another contract by the county, thus ending a 20-year association with their longest-serving player who made his debut at Park Avenue, Bradford, in June 1970.

Only Trevor Jesty and David Hughes, of Lancashire, and Eddie Hemmings, of Nottinghamshire, have been longer in the first-class game and the fortunes of Bairstow, aged 39 on September 1, contrast starkly with those of Hughes.

On that day the Lancashire captain will lead his side out at Lord's in the final of the NatWest Trophy, while Bairstow captains the Yorkshire

Exiles against the county side in the Scarborough Festival. Bairstow, who is in a testimonial year, is Yorkshire's most successful wicket-keeper-batsman, three times completing 1,000 runs in a season and scoring 900. His 1,036 county victims put him third behind David Hunter (1,190) and Jimmy Binks (1,044), but neither made anything like his 12,485 runs.

Bairstow played for England in four Tests, against India, 1979, West Indies in 1980, in the Centenary Test against Australia the same year and the third Test of the West Indian tour the following winter. He played in 21 limited overs internationals.

Wattana confirms his preparedness

From a CORRESPONDENT IN HONG KONG

JAMES Wattana, aged 20, last season enjoyed a remarkable first year on the professional circuit earning more than £60,000 and finishing 32nd in the rankings. Yesterday the young Thai confirmed that he is ready to make an even bigger impact on the world snooker stage.

Wattana, in only 90 minutes, brushed aside the challenge of Terry Griffiths, one of the game's most experienced players, to win 5-0 in the first round of the 555 World Series Challenge here in Hong Kong.

Twelve months ago Wattana, full of enthusiasm, destroyed Griffiths 5-0 in the semi final of the Asian Open in his native Bangkok. But their second meeting was thought by many to be a much closer affair.

Neither player enjoyed the 10am start but it was Wattana who was first into his stride with a break of 81 and outclassed Griffiths, the world No. 6, simply could not keep pace with the potting skills of his opponent.

A disappointed Griffiths said: "I know that I've just got off the plane from England but there is no reason to play as badly as that. I felt okay but in the end I couldn't pot a ball."

Wattana, who is on course to move into the top sixteen

next year, now meets Welshman Doug Mountjoy in the quarter-final tomorrow. He said: "Terry just did not play well because he could not make a 20 break."

Two Grimsby professionals - Mike Hallett and Dean Reynolds - moved confidently into the quarter finals with easy successes over local opposition. Reynolds thrashed the Hong Kong champion, Kenny Kwok, 5-0, while Hallett eased to a 5-1 victory against Franky Chan, the island's only professional.

RESULTS: First round: J Wattana (Thailand) beat T Griffiths (Wales) 5-0. Frame scores: Wattana first: 89-1, 75-42, 70-23, 78-18, 55-48. D Reynolds (Eng) beat K Kwok (HK) 5-0. Frame scores (Wattana first): 62-32, 74-27, 58-23, 66-36, 74-18. M Hallett (Eng) beat F Chan (HK) 5-1. Frame scores (Hallett first): 78-23, 15-34, 72-18, 63-16, 63-33, 78-26.

Help sought

RABAT (AFP) - The head of Manchester's lobby to host the 1996 Olympics, Robert Scott, asked Moroccan officials here yesterday to support his campaign, and offered to help Morocco's bid to hold the 1998 football World Cup. The International Olympic Committee meets in Japan next month to choose a venue from among Manchester, Athens, Atlanta, Melbourne, Belgrade and Toronto.

Leonard moves to Harlequins

By PETER BALL

THE England prop forward, Jason Leonard, the most successful newcomer on the recent tour of Argentina is leaving Saracens to join Harlequins.

Leonard, at the age of 21 considered potentially the finest loose-head prop in the country, has attended training at Harlequins and is listed to accompany them to Cornwall this weekend on a pre-season trip.

Saracens, angry and distressed at the loss of a player crucial to their prospects as a force in first division rugby, last night talked of "poaching" by senior clubs.

Saracens president-elect, John Heggadon, said: "I am very saddened by the whole affair. Leonard has been under

pressure from the Harlequins for a year to join them; that is what makes us sick. We have had a player who desperately wants to play for England but has been told by certain influential people associated with England that to facilitate that, he would have to go to Quins."

"What it amounts to is harassment and intimidation and I have to say I don't like the way English rugby is going."

Saracens alleged that inducements have been offered to the player, albeit within the rules. But Heggadon says: "This acquisition of players who were perfectly happy at their clubs disillusioned us."

"It means that all the hard work and effort put into developing good players is a waste of time. Where does this

leave clubs like ourselves? It is time the Rugby Union said openly whether it wants an elite of about six clubs in the country for its England players. That appears to be happening in London, for Harlequins and Wasps seem to enjoy a privileged position."

Saracens believe Harlequins' internationalists persuaded Leonard during the Argentine tour. Their ire has been stoked by the fact that the loss of Leonard comes only 12 months after Wasps recruited the Saracens B international, Dean Ryan. His move was a bitter disappointment to Southgate officials.

Heggadon said: "We are bound to ask what is the game heading towards? If a first division club which has a successful season in the top

flight cannot hold on to its players. It is very discouraging for us to have this sort of thing happening by what really is poaching."

The Harlequins' director of coaching, Mike Davis, denied the club had acted improperly, saying: "Players talk among themselves especially on tours and in an amateur sport anyone can play for which ever club they want."

Leonard cited the calibre of players at Harlequins as the main reason for his move. "I shall be in the company capable of teaching me everything about international rugby," he said. "I have been asked to go there for two years and never had much intention of doing so. But the taste of international rugby has convinced me this can help me reinforce my England place."

Elliott provides role model for Cram

By DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

PETER Elliott has offered a pep talk to one of the five athletes he categorises as his main rivals to win the European 1,500 metres title in Split next week. Steve Cram, the mile world record holder whose fitness for a championship is under question, should take encouragement, Elliott said, from his example.

Elliott's supreme form in May, when he was the fastest 800 and 1,500 metres runner

in the world, was wrecked through June and July by a chest infection, a calf strain and a knee injury. Here on Tuesday, within hearing distance of the world's largest bell, Elliott gave the impression that when the little track-side one in Split sounds on Saturday week he will be the athlete with the most left to give.

His time of 3min 34.12sec was proof, after the limited evidence of a 3:55.51 mile at Gateshead on Friday, that he

is fighting fit. Cram, too, has had his problems: calf, Achilles, gastro-enteritis. Instead of racing, he has opted for training this week in his final preparation for Split. Cram's 3:35.98 in Grosseto, Italy, last week is the only public statement that he may be a contender. Elliott has not discounted him, though, listing Cram, Jens-Peter Herolt, Gennaro Di Napoli, Hervé Phélippeau and Neil Horsfield

as the ones he must watch. "Two weeks ago I didn't think I would be going to the Europeans, but it is amazing what a week in athletics can bring," Elliott said. "Last week I trained hard on Monday and Wednesday and raced on Friday and I feel good again. I know people have got their doubts about Steve, but if he can keep training here, he can be a real contender in the shape for Split."

Q.
If we've got all the questions, who's got all the answers?

A.

You?

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